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The UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

ON THE EVE OF THE PARLIAMENT OF PEACE

BY

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NEW YORK
DOUBLEDAY & McCLURE CO.
1899

27903

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PREFACE

In the year 1898 two strange things happened. It is difficult to say which was more unexpected.

In the West the American Republic, which for more than a hundred years had made as its proudest boast its haughty indifference to the temptation of territorial conquest, suddenly abjured its secular creed, and concluded a war upon which it had entered with every protestation of absolute disinterestedness by annexations so sweeping as to invest the United States with all that was left of the heritage of imperial Spain.

In the East a Sovereign autocrat, commanding the bayonets of four millions of trained soldiers and the implicit obedience of one hundred and twenty millions of loyal subjects, amazed and bewildered mankind by formally and publicly arraigning the armaments of the modern world, and summoning a Conference of all the Powers to discuss practical measures for abating an evil which threatened to land civilized society in the abyss.

Many other things happend in 1898, but nothing for a moment to compare with the significance of these two immense events, which, each in its own way, constitute landmarks in the evolution of the human race.

The Peace Rescript of the Tsar of Russia, the Treaty of Peace extorted at the sword's point from prostrate Spain—these two strongly contrasted documents constitute together one of the paradoxes of History. It is the pacific Republic which makes war, which multiplies its army fourfold, and which seizes by the right of conquest the colonial possessions of Spain. It is the Imperial autocrat of a military empire who impeaches the war system of the world, and, himself the master of a thousand legions, invites the nations to a Parliament of Peace.

It is not surprising that a contrast so startling, an exchange of rôles so unexpected, should at once arrest and bewilder the contemporary observer. We are still too near this great transformation scene adequately to realize its full significance.

In order better to ascertain what might be the true meaning and vital import of the sudden apparition of an industrial Commonwealth as a conquering and annexing Imperial power, and the not less startling apparition of the Tsar of Russia in the garb of an angel of peace, I undertook a rapid journey round Europe in the autumn of 1898, for the twofold purpose of ascertaining what the men of the Old World thought of the latest development of the New World, and of discovering the true inwardness of the Tsar's Rescript, and the degree of welcome which it was likely to receive from the peoples to whom it was addressed.

I left London on September 15th for Brussels, and visited in rapid succession Liége, Paris, Berlin, St.

MAP OF EUROPE SHOWING MR. STEAD'S ROUTE.

(Towns underlined indicate stopping places.)

Petersburg, Moscow, Sebastopol and Yalta. At Yalta I had the honor of being twice received by the Tsar at Livadia. Returning to Sebastopol, I took the steamer to Constantinople. The Orient Express brought me to Sofia, the capital of the Principality of Bulgaria, from whence I passed by Belgrade and Buda Pesth to Vienna. From Vienna, I went by Florence to Rome. On my way home I called at Cannes, Geneva and Berne, revisiting Paris on November 26th, and reaching London on November 28th.

In one respect I was advantageously placed for hearing the views of trained and experienced observers. Most travellers consider themselves lucky if they can count upon the assistance of one Ambassador in each country which they visit. I, fortunately, can always call upon three. Born in Britain, and carrying on business in America, I found myself equally at home in the British and American Embassies; while Russia has so long been to me as a second country, that her Ambassadors were at least as helpful as those of the English-speaking nations.

Besides these official representatives, I naturally found myself everywhere at home with the unofficial ambassadors of the public, who, under the unassuming guise of newspaper correspondents, do much more to form the opinion of the civilized world than all the ambassadors, ministers, and plenipotentiaries put together. Without their aid, generously afforded me wherever I went, it would have been idle to attempt

such a rapid survey of the Continent as I venture to present in these pages.

It would be the maddest presumption to pretend that in a rush round Europe, begun and completed in less than three months, anything can be obtained beyond a series of general impressions, instantaneous photographs as it were, of the ever-shifting panorama of Continental politics. But on the two points to which I specially addressed myself it is perhaps not too much to hope that I may at least have succeeded in bringing into clear relief the salient features of the situation. Everywhere I asked what the men of the Old World thought of the newest New World that had suddenly revealed itself beyond the seas. Everywhere also I asked what about the Peace Conference to which the world had been summoned by the Tsar. Incidentally, of course, I treat upon many other subjects, but the answers to these inquiries form the central essence of this book.

I have drawn freely upon the letters and articles which in the course of my tour I contributed to the *Daily News*, the Associated Press of America, and the *Review of Reviews*.

In conclusion, I may take the opportunity of announcing that should this Annual meet with public appreciation, I hope to begin with the twentieth century a series of Annuals which would provide the general reader with a more or less comprehensive survey of the movements of the twelvemonth, written from a special standpoint after personal converse with the

sovereigns and statesmen, the diplomatists and journalists of Europe. Of year-books of the statistical and dry-as-dust order there are enough and to spare. But of Annuals written to be read, and not merely to be referred to, I do not know of one.

WILLIAM T. STEAD.

Review of Reviews Office,
Mowbray House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C.
January 1st, 1899.

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

PART I

TOWARDS THE FEDERATION OF THE WORLD

CHAPTER I

U.S.A. AND U.S.E.

"The United States of Europe" is a phrase naturally suggested by the United States of America. The latter enables the former to be at least thinkable. For a hundred years the world has been familiarized with the spectacle of a continually increasing number of independent and sovereign States living together in federal union. An experiment which has lasted so long, and which on the whole has borne such good fruits, naturally suggests the question whether a similar arrangement may not be the ultimate solution of many of the problems which perplex us in the Old World. It is true that the United States of America have not survived their century without at least one

bloody war. But although for four years the Republic trod knee-deep in the winepress of the wrath of God, the Union emerged from that ordeal not merely no weaker, but infinitely stronger than before. The war that saved the Union was infinitely more important because it secured the unity of the American State, than even because it indirectly effected the emancipation of the negro. For it was the preservation of the Union which enabled the Americans to escape the blighting curse of the Armed Peace against which Europe is at last beginning to rise in revolt. Thus the United States of Europe, the United States of America, and the Tsar's Rescript are all bound together much more closely than might at first sight have been imagined. The United States of America, because they are united, have succeeded down to the present year in maintaining peace and order throughout their vast territories, and in building up one of the greatest of world-powers, not merely without any resort to conscription, but even without any standing army at all.

It will be objected that, down to the outbreak of the recent war, the Americans had what was called a standing army. What they had was 25,000 Federal gendarmes—a force not twice as large as the total number of the London Metropolitan Constabulary. Now a force of 25,000 men in a nation of seventy millions can hardly be regarded as other than the sceptre of sovereign power wielded by the Federal Executive, a sceptre rather than a sword, the symbol

of sovereignty rather than the instrument by which it can be exerted. The collapse of the great Rebellion, the extinction of the attempt to found a slave Republic in the Southern States, enabled the Americans to escape the plague of hostile frontiers. Being united in a fraternal and federal Republic, they have had no occasion to build fortresses or to create fortified camps, nor have they, even in their nightmares, dreamed of subjecting the whole of their able-bodied youth to the enforced slavery of compulsory military service. Had the Confederacy triumphed, all this would have been altered, and two rival republics would have confronted each other north and south of a geographical line which would have bristled with bayonets and frowned with cannon. The secret of their deliverance from this plague of the Old World must be found in the preservation of their Union.

It is therefore natural, when the young War Lord of the greatest of European armies issued his memorable indictment of the armed system of the Old World, that Europeans should turn their eyes with wistful longing to the continent which has hitherto been immune to militarism, and which has exhibited to the world the greatest example of disarmament on record. Nor is it surprising, perceiving the open secret of the way in which the Americans have escaped the worst forms of the malady which is eating out the vitals of the modern State, that dwellers in the Old World should begin to ask themselves anxiously whether or not the ultimate solution of the problem which will

be considered by the Peace Conference is to be found in the realization of the conception which has hitherto been confined to idealists like Victor Hugo or seers like Mazzini. In other words, the summoning of the Parliament of Peace brings us within sight, if not within hailing distance, of the recognition of the United States of Europe.

Such at least was the idea which, in the autumn of 1898, led me to undertake for the first time a tour of the new Continental Commonwealth *in posse*, with the twofold object—first, of seeing by personal experience how far the nations and states were already for practical purposes welded into one; and secondly, discovering how far public opinion in the various capitals was prepared to welcome the next step which it was proposed to take in the direction of settled peace.

On the day before I started from London, Mr. Neaf, the European editor of the Associated Press—that organization which, from its hold on the newspapers of the United States, may be regarded as the keeper of the ear of Uncle Sam—asked me whether I would write him a letter from each of the capitals I visited, describing what the Old World thought of the newest evolution of the New World—the sudden flaming up of American enthusiasm on behalf of the victims of Spanish oppression, and the consequent expansion of the boundaries of the American Commonwealth. Closely allied with this evolution of American Imperialism was the apparition of the United States as an active competitor in the neutral markets of the world.

I accepted the commission, and the contents of this volume are necessarily more or less influenced by the double task to which I addressed myself. At the same time I venture to hope that the very complexity of the study will add somewhat to the interest of the book.

From one point of view Europe contemplates the United States of America as having realized the ideal towards which the Rescript of the Tsar appears ultimately to point. On the other hand, Europe perceives the United States devoting themselves to a war of liberation, which, according to the familiar precedent, appeared to develop into a war of conquest; while simultaneously the American producer, already supreme in the supply of produce of the soil, suddenly reveals himself as a formidable rival in all manner of manufactured goods. This last factor in the problem, although regarded (as Count Goluchowsky publicly declared) with consternation and alarm, counts nevertheless as a very valuable element in the forces making for peace and disarmament. It brings home to the average man the enormous advantages in industrial competition which are enjoyed by a nation that is free to devote the whole of its inventive capacity to the arts of production, and to pass the whole of its youth into the factory and the mill, without previously taking tithe of their years in the heavy *corvée* of the barracks. Thus at the same time that the United States of America afford the disunited States of Europe the spectacle of a great nation, orderly and

free, which has grown up to greatness without any more than a mere symbol of an army, the menacing ascendancy of the American producer in the markets of the world tends to drive the lesson home that the ways of militarism are the ways of death. In the long run it may be found that the phenomenal increase of American exports in the year 1898 may do more to induce the acceptance of the Russian Emperor's proposals than all the appeals of the moralists and all the arguments of the philanthropists.

"This is the way: walk ye in it," is the word uttered from the Imperial throne of Muscovy, while from across the Atlantic comes as a deep response—"And if ye do not walk in it, ye will assuredly die." Die—not necessarily by the sword, but by the absolute inability of nations, weighed down with the ever-increasing burden of modern armaments, to compete with their disencumbered rivals. England, France, Germany and Italy have been desperately struggling for some years past to obtain possession of unopened markets. They have spent millions like water in order to secure prior rights over great expanses of African and Asiatic territory which are only prospective markets at the best; and all the while they have ignored the fact that they are in imminent danger of losing control of their own market, and that while they may gain a more or less doubtful chance of a turnover of hundreds of thousands in distant continents, the increase of American exports to the European market is to be reckoned every year by millions. This economic

portent, to which for the moment the public turns a blind eye, will every day more and more assert itself, and more and more tend to compel the Old World to adopt the New World conditions, or to give up the struggle. What are the New World conditions? They are these—all the States dwell together in Federal Union, without hostile frontiers and without standing armies, and with a greater expenditure upon education than upon armaments. There are other factors in the problem, no doubt; these are the chief. We in the Old World cannot hope to rival the vast resources of a continent which even now is but partially developed; but the fact that we are naturally handicapped in competing with the virgin resources of the New World renders it all the more necessary that we should disembarass ourselves of all the artificial impediments which render it difficult, not to say impossible, for us to hold our own in the struggle for existence in the markets of the world. The United States of Europe, therefore, however remote it may appear to those who look merely at the surface of things, may be much nearer than even the most sanguine amongst us venture at present to hope.

CHAPTER II.

LINKS AND BARRIERS.

A tour round Europe seemed to me the most natural way of bringing forcibly to my mind a sense of the factors which impede this natural development. The problem can be approached from many points of view, and studied in many ways; but I elected to choose the simple method of going round Europe to see places and things for myself at first hand, and to form some kind of an idea as to what were the forces making for union, and what were those which tended to make the adoption of the federal principle difficult or impossible.

To begin with, it is impossible not to be impressed with the contrast between Europe to-day and Europe a few centuries ago. Five hundred years ago it would have been practically impossible for me to have made the circular tour from which I have just returned. In the first place, the countries through which I passed would not have been at peace one with the other; in the second place, I should have had great difficulty in obtaining permission to cross many frontiers, and thirdly, I should in some countries have been in imminent danger of losing my life, or at least my liberty.

Last year Europe was in profound peace. There was no difficulty whatever in crossing any frontier, nor did I experience any more risk to life or liberty in travelling through the Continent than I should have done in making a tour round Kent, or passing from New York to San Francisco. For travelling purposes Europe is already a commonwealth. But there are two relics of barbarism still remaining which compel the wayfaring man to admit the existence of independent, rival, or hostile States. The first is common to all countries; the second is confined to one or two. The first is a custom-house. But for the pestilent nuisance of the *douane*, the tourist could go from the North Cape to Gibraltar, from Cape Finisterre to Transylvania, without ever being aware that he was passing from one jurisdiction to another. The uniforms of the police and of the soldiery differ somewhat, but so also do the features of the landscape. Personally he would experience no more inconvenience in passing from France to Germany or from Belgium to Holland, than he would from passing from New York into Pennsylvania, or from Illinois into Minnesota. The second obstacle which stands in the way of this continental unity is the maintenance in the two countries of Russia and the Ottoman Empire of the system of the passport. This passport—a nuisance at one time almost universal—has gradually retreated eastwards, until now no one ever asks to look at your passport outside Russia and Turkey. It is not very pleasant for a Russian or a friend of Russia to have to

bracket the two countries together; but in this matter of passports they are much of a muchness, Russia perhaps being even the worse of the two. Without a passport duly *viséd* by Russian consular authorities, no foreigner can pass into the Russian Empire. Without that passport duly surrendered to the police at each town where he arrives, no foreigner can take up his abode in Russia. The same thing is true to a less extent in Turkey. These two countries, therefore, are outside the pale of passportless civilization. They belong to the States which, for domestic or other reasons, dare not make their territories free to mankind to come and to go. The United States of Europe, therefore, is as the United States of America in three parts of its surface, so far as travelling is concerned, *plus* the iritating reminder by the custom-house of the existence of frontiers; while over the rest of its surface it is as the United States of America, *plus* the custom-house and the passport.

The great ideal of international freedom and union is to be found in the post-office. Wherever you see the red pillar-box, there you see a dumb prophet of the Millennium. The moment the stamped missive enters its ever open portal it becomes a citizen of the universe, free from all custom houses, and protected, by virtue of the Queen's head which it carries, in all lands, irrespective of differences of nationality, law and religion. The International Postal Union is the *avant-courier* or John the Baptist of the Kingdom of Heaven, in which all frontiers would disappear and

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all mankind would be made free of the planet in which they dwell. Often on my journey I witnessed, with a feeling of satisfaction not untinged with envy, the way in which the mail-bags were carried across the frontier without word or question, while we luckless ones, who were not franked with a postage stamp, had to laboriously carry our luggage to the Zollhaus and wait until the custom-house official had made a more or less perfunctory examination of our belongings. It is true that the customs examination was in most cases exceedingly formal; in some, as in Switzerland, and in coming back to England, it was the merest form. But this only increases your irritation at the exasperating worry and delay occasioned by a formality so manifestly futile. How often did I sigh for the adoption of Sir Algernon West's sensible proposal, by which all the nuisance of custom-house examination was to be done away with—at least between England and France. But although it is nearly two years since he made his excellent suggestion, nothing seems as yet to have come of it.

The only other institution in Europe which can be compared to the post-office for the success with which it has triumphed over the limitations of frontiers and the restrictions imposed by short-sighted governments upon the free movement of men and things, is that marvellous agency by which it is possible for the traveller, with the aid of Circular Notes, to draw whatever money he requires wherever he may be. I never used to cash my Circular Notes without feeling a dumb

wonder at the marvellous ingenuity of man and the skill with which he is able to do all things, if only "there is money in it." Instead of having to carry round with me a pocketful of gold, I simply took in my pocket-book a bundle of Circular Notes, utterly valueless to any one who had not got the circular which must be produced whenever they were cashed. Armed with these bits of paper, I found in every capital, one, or two, or sometimes three financial institutions which were ready at a moment's notice to pay me down as much money as the Circular Notes represented, without any deduction or trouble whatever. You give no notice, but simply walk into the office, announce that you want so much money, and present notes for the amount required. In five or ten minutes the money is handed to you, calculated carefully at the current rate of exchange of the day, and you depart, feeling impressed with the perfection of the organization of credit by which at a thousand different points in your journey, not in Europe only, but in other continents, you can convert a bit of paper, valueless to any one else, into gold, by producing it and the corresponding circular in any of the agencies in connection with the central office. If, after the fashion of Orientals, you converted your cash into precious stones, you would only be allowed to enter the country after having paid tax and toll to the custom-house; but thanks to the Circular Note you can snap your fingers at this institution, and cash your notes in a kingdom where no custom-house officer can

interfere. The Circular Note is the nearest approach to an international currency which we have arrived at, for unlike coins of the realm, Circular Notes are convertible in every land and at the full current rate of exchange.

I was exceedingly fortunate in being saved the difficulties of the two worst custom-houses through which I had to pass. I had a *laissez-passer* from the Russian Embassy, which cleared me from all the inquisition at Wirballen. Thanks to the timely kindness of M. Kroupensky, who has now succeeded M. Pavloff at Pekin, I was able to evade the Turkish custom-house altogether, as I landed from the Sebastopol steamer in the Russian guard-boat. Only once was there a question of paying as much as a single penny on my luggage. I had bought a Bulgarian peasant dress for my daughter, and narrowly escaped having to pay duty upon it as wearing apparel not for my own use, when I crossed the frontier from Servia into Hungary; but the custom-house officer was merciful, although he mildly lamented that I had not sent it through under seal. But from first to last, in a tour round an oval which had London and Sebastopol as its two extreme points, I had much less inconvenience from the custom house than what one hundred years ago I should have experienced in passing from Rotterdam to Vienna. It may be difficult to see how the custom-house is to be finally abolished, but already its inconveniences are minimized; and if the *douane* does not bear in its visage the evidence of galloping consump-

tion, it seems to be in a decline which, under the impulse of modern ideas, will probably be accelerated.

As for passports, that is a more difficult question. Certainly in Turkey and in the states, such as Servia and Bulgaria, which have been carved out of the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, the utility of the passport is not very obvious. Whether it can be dispensed with in Russia is a matter upon which a non-Russian is not competent to express an opinion. The utility of the passport from the point of view of keeping out dangerous characters or inconvenient visitors is not very obvious to the stranger, who soon discovers that the people whom it is sought to keep out are always those who have their passports in the most splendid order. Of course there is a great deal to be said in favor of a system by which no person can move a step without an authentic document duly certifying who he is, and where he comes from, and all about him; but in practice the passport system falls far short of this ideal. Those persons who have least reputation have the most passports, and the less regular a man may be in his life, the more scrupulous he is that there shall be no complaint as to the regularity of his official papers. I am not, however, either defending or complaining of what exists. I am only endeavoring to explain what are those things which differentiate the United States of Europe from the United States of America.

When we leave those elements which tend to disunion and come to consider those which tend to bring about the formation of the United States of Europe,

it will be a surprise to some that the institution of monarchy holds a high place. We are so much under the influence of the poetry and political writing of generations when wars were common, that it is difficult for us to understand that the world has changed since then. The poetry of the beginning of the century had as its not the assumption that the wars which afflicted mankind were the direct product of the rapacity of monarchs. The "monarch-murdered soldier" was an excellent phrase, which has been carried down for generations. When Byron describes the innocent mirth of a Spanish festival, he cannot refrain from exclaiming:—

"Oh, monarchs! could ye taste the mirth ye mar,
Not in the toils of glory would yet sweat,
The hoarse dull drum ould sleep, and man be happy yet."

That superstition as to the war-making influence of monarchy dies hard; but if we look at things as they are, there is very little room for continuing to cherish the delusion that blinds us to the real sources of the perils which menace the peace of the world. Of this I was continually being reminded in my journey round Europe.

The day I arrived at Brussels was the day on which the memorial mass was being said for the Empress-Queen, Elizabeth of Austria-Hungary. Her death by the knife of the assassin placed one-half of Europe in mourning; and the death of the Queen of Denmark, which occurred immediately afterwards, was even

more widely felt. The death of "the grandmamma of Europe," as she was familiarly called, was incidentally the cause of delaying the publication of this "Christmas Annual" until the month of March. Her daughter, the Dowager Empress of Russia, wished to have her son, the Emperor Nicholas, at the funeral. This compelled him to leave Livadia, cross Russia, and repair to Copenhagen, where he remained for a fortnight. My interview was therefore postponed until his return. These are only trifles, but they serve as reminders of the closeness of the family tie which unites one country with the other. Our own royal family has ramifications which cover Europe. The Emperor of Russia and the Emperor of Germany are both nephews of the Prince of Wales, whose brother-in-law is the King of Greece, and whose son-in-law will be King of Roumania.

If the ultimate ideal of Europe is to become one family without any barriers separating one from the other—a family, all the members of which are familiar enough to be interested in each other's affairs, to attend each other's weddings, to go into mourning for each other's deaths—then Royalty has attained what the rest of mankind will only attain after some centuries. The monarchical families form a group which, from a physical and physiological point of view, is even too closely united. Marrying in-and-in has consequences which are not by any means calculated to contribute to the robustness or to the intellectual vigor of the stock. Indeed, one eminent man, whom I

heard at Rome, is devoting no end of time and attention to a demonstration of the thesis that all dynasties are dying out, and must die out by the nature of things and by the law of the universe. It may be so, but the process is a slow one, and they will not perish before they have familiarized mankind with the spectacle of an international family group, speaking practically a common language, having common interests, and capable of understanding each other from the inside.

Signor Sonnino, with whom I had a long, interesting conversation at Rome, told me that he considered the coming century would be a monarchical century, and that that monarchical principle, which had been somewhat depressed since the days of the French Revolution, was destined to be re-vindicated in the years that are to come. However that may be, there is no doubt that our Queen by the vigor of her intellect, the keenness of the interest which she has taken in public affairs, the marvellous memory with which she has been blessed, and her strong sense of the obligations of family relationship, has done much to re-establish the monarchical idea. Her correspondence with the members of the royal caste or royal family throughout Europe is, and has always been, carefully kept up. Hence, all monarchical States have at their head a semi-cosmopolitan European family, capable of acting as a telephonic system for the Continent.

France, which is outside this royal ring, may have her compensations elsewhere, but she certainly suffers

deprivations in the lack of continuity of tradition, and of the permanence of persons who direct her policy. The uneasy consciousness of this is one of the causes, when the compensating advantages of the Republic seem to fade away, which leads to the perpetual renewal of the talk of Restoration, even after thirty years of the third Republic.

Whether we regard the recrudescence of monarchy as a symptom of reaction or as a sign of progress, there is no doubt as to its existence. What we have to do is to make the most of it and to recognize in what way it makes for progress.

After Royalty, it is probable that the most potent things tending to make Europeans conscious of the unity of the Continental Commonwealth are the telegraphic agencies, such as Reuter's, the Havas, and others, which, chiefly through the daily papers, continually distribute the political and social gossip of the Continent among the nations. Let no one overlook the value of gossip in the formation of the ties which bind men together. Take away family gossip, and the family would in most cases become a mere skeleton, without flesh, blood or nervous system. It is by the kindly gossip of the fireside, in which every one talks about everybody else, that the sense of family union is created and preserved. The chatterers of the telegraph who, in every capital, carefully extract the kernel of grain from the bushel of chaff, and telegraph all round the Continent such items of intelligence as may be of general interest, contribute probably the

most constantly potent influence that can be discovered in the growth of that common sentiment which is the precursor of common action in support of the Commonwealth. Great and ubiquitous is the telegraphic agency. Our fathers used to think that the newspaper represented the highest organized intelligence, seeking day and night for information with which to feed its ever hungry press. But no newspaper, not even the *Times* itself, can bear comparison with the telegraphic agencies, such as Reuter's, the Havas, and the Associated Press, for the collection and distribution of intelligence. Every great newspaper is more than a collector of news: it is always a commentator, and usually a preacher of its own ideas. A telegraphic agency is neither of these things, and disseminates news only. It is creedless alike in politics and in religion. Its sole duty is to see the nuggetty fact in the amount of dross brought to surface by the illimitable labor of the human race, and promptly to put that nuggetty fact into general circulation. Hence, no river can burst its dam in Northern Italy, or in remoter Roumania, and sweep away any appreciable number of the human race to a watery death, but the fact is served up the next morning at all the breakfast tables of the Continent. And here again the Royalties, in addition to the service which they render to unity by the creation of a family that is practically co-extensive with the Continent, are hardly less useful in the supply of that personal gossip which is always most appreciated by the average man and

woman. The birth and the death, the betrothal and the marriage, the accident, and even the scandals of the Royal caste, are all food for gossip; and in this fashion the telegraph wire and the Royal and Imperial dynasties act and react upon each other. The King of Lilliput cannot sprain his ankle without the fact being a subject for comment and of interest throughout the whole Continental area. A thousand greater men than he might break their necks without the fact being considered of sufficient interest to be chronicled. Therein consists the superior utility of the Kingdom of Lilliput. Thrones are but pedestals on which human beings stand visibly above the crowd, and therefore objects of more general human interest than any of the undistinguished mass below.

The railway and the telegraph are both becoming more and more international institutions. There are still, no doubt, shreds of nationalism left in the management of the telegraphs of the world, but on the whole they tend more and more to become a common nerve-centre of the whole human race. But the railway and telegraph are subjects which must be dealt with in a separate chapter.

There is a steady approximation to unity throughout the Continent. We have not yet a European coinage, but throughout the Latin countries there is an international currency, and sooner or later Europe will have a common currency.

The railways and the telegraphs are inventions of

this century, and they have, therefore, adapted themselves, almost from the outset, to the complex circumstances of their environment.

It is different with the great rivers of Europe, which were international highways long before Watt and Stephenson taught steam to do the haulage of the world, or electricians harnessed the lightning as the Hermes of the modern Olympus. All the traffic upon such great arterial waterways of the Continent as the Rhine and the Danube has long been subject to international control and regulation. At this point we reach a further stage in the evolution of the United States of Europe. In the case of the railways it may be regarded to a great extent as unconscious, inasmuch as the International Railway Bureau has no direct connection with the Foreign Offices of the world. It is different with the Riverain Commissions. The navigation of the Danube is indeed one of the most interesting illustrations of the way in which the European Powers modify the machinery of their joint action for the purpose of securing efficiency of working. At the outset, the River Danube was under the control of the six great Powers and Turkey. But the practical management of the river now is intrusted to a commission of the Riverain States, *plus* one delegate from the great Powers. That is to say, the International Danube is managed by a committee of five, one delegate being appointed for six months by each of the great Powers in turn, while there are four permanent delegates appointed by the Riverain States of Austria,

Bulgaria, Roumania and Servia. This is interesting in more ways than one, because it establishes the principle of the appointment of a European delegate on the principle of rotation. Each representative of the great Powers only holds his seat for six months, so that each great Power has only one turn in three years. The European delegate, however, although representing his own State, is in reality the representative of the United States of Europe, and in that capacity defends the general interest, in case it should be attacked, in the interest of the Riverain States.

Another principle which it embodies is that a great Power when it happens to have local interest is not debarred from having two representatives when its turn comes round to appoint a general delegate. Austria, for instance, has its permanent delegate, and once in three years it has a general representative as one of the Committee of the great Powers in the affairs of Europe. The third principle, we shall see, bears directly upon the question of the status of Bulgaria. According to the Treaty of Berlin, Bulgaria is part of the Ottoman Empire. It is a tributary State. Strictly speaking, it is the Sultan, and not the Prince of Bulgaria, who should nominate the delegate on the Danubian Commission, who represents the Riverain Principality. The Sultan, however, can only appoint a general delegate as one of the signatories of the Treaty of Berlin, while the right of Bulgaria to appoint its permanent representative on the Riverain Commission is recognized. Acting on this precedent, we shall find

MAP OF EUROPE SHOWING INTERNATIONAL RAILWAYS AND RIVERS

that Bulgaria will expect to be represented at the Peace Conference, although it would, I believe, be the first occasion at which a tributary Principality has claimed to sit at the council-board with its own suzerain.

From the regulation of international rivers on the Continent it is but a short step to the European Concert, which primarily exists for the safeguarding of that great international waterway known as the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. Reduced to its essence, this, and very little else but this, is the basis of the Concert of the Powers formally established by the Treaty of Paris in 1856, and asserted anew at the Berlin Congress of 1878. Behind all the fine principles which are invoked in the diplomatic instruments governing the complex congeries of problems known as the Eastern Question, the bedrock of the whole, the kernel, the central essence, is this supreme question as to the international regulation of the waterways connecting the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Because the Turk squats astride of both sides of these famous Straits, the Turk has been a European interest for at least a century. He is no longer regarded as an exclusively British interest, but his charmed life is due to the fact that he is keeper of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, and in that capacity he possesses the merit of utility, which in the eye of many is more efficacious than charity in covering a multitude of sins. In order to deal with a question of such international interest, international action was necessary.

Hence the intervention of the principle of the European Concert, that great and fertile principle which, more than anything else, holds within it the promise and potency of every form of international development.

CHAPTER III

THE CAPITAL OF THE CONTINENT

On returning from Rome, at one time the capital of the world, and still the capital of that section of the Christian Church which recognizes in the Roman Bishop the successor of St. Peter, I made a detour in order to visit Berne, which is the nearest approximation there is in Europe to a common capital. At Berne it was my good fortune to make the acquaintance of M. Numa Droz, the head of the International Railway Bureau, which is one of four international administrations that have their seats in the federal capital of Switzerland. M. Numa Droz is a very remarkable man, and I met no one in my tour whose conversation was at once so intelligent, so reasonable, and so hopeful. A man still in the prime of life, he has served his country in almost every capacity, from the President of the Republic downwards. When the European Powers were puzzled as to the best international representative to nominate for the Governorship of Crete, their choice fell upon M. Droz, and afterwards, when the task of restoring order was entrusted to Prince George, it was again to M. Numa Droz that they turned when they wished to provide a typical

sensible, trustworthy European to hold the balance even between the various interests in the island. A man of judicial temperament, with great administrative experience, M. Numa Droz is at once a patriotic Swiss and a broad-minded citizen of the world. Should he be selected as the representative of Switzerland at the Conference of Peace, there will be no delegate from any of the great Powers who will command greater respect or whose judgment will carry greater weight.

In February last year M. Droz read a paper at a conference in Zürich, in which he described the organization and the work of the international bureaus at Berne. It is one of the most interesting and suggestive papers that I came across in my run round Europe. In it he described with admirable perspicacity and brevity the rapid growth of these central bureaus, which are to the United States of Europe like the ice-crystals which form on the surface of the water before the cold is sufficiently intense to freeze the whole surface into one solid sheet. These international bureaus represent the evolution of what may be called the Continental ganglia of nerve-centres, and each of them may be regarded as an embodied prophecy of the coming of the United States of Europe. And not only the United States of Europe, but the United States of the World. For the area which three of those administrations represent is far wider than that of any single continent. As M. Droz said, there is no doubt that the formation of these international bureaus is one of

the most interesting and hopeful signs of our epoch—that these international organizations have been created by the Governments in order to serve the ends of civilization. As a Switzer, M. Droz is naturally proud of the fact that four of these should have their head in the capital of his own country. There are other bureaus which have their seats elsewhere. For instance, the International Bureau of Metrical Weights and Measures is domiciled in Paris. The Bureau Géodésique is seated at Berlin, while at Brussels there are two international bureaus, one which arranges for the publication of the customs tariffs of all nations, and the other is concerned with the suppression of the slave-trade. But at Berne they glory in the possession of four, as many as are to be found in all the rest of the world put together. These are the bureaus of the International Postal Union, the Telegraphic Union, the Union of International Railways, and that which looks after Patents, Copyrights and Trade-marks, which are summed together under the common title of "Intellectual Property."

When we were children, we used to hear much concerning "Commerce, the white-winged peace-maker," and have only, after a series of disillusions, wakened to the fact that in the present day commerce has become the pretext, if not the cause, for most of our international quarrels. It is, therefore, with a pleasant surprise, such as one feels when discovering that a fairy-tale of the nursery had been but a poetic em-

bodiment of a scientific fact, that we come upon the following passage in M. Droz's paper:—

> It is the chief glory of commerce to be the principal agent in drawing nations together. It is of no use to try to isolate them by making the walls of the custom-house as thick and as high as possible; trade has an expansive force and a subtle pervasiveness so great that in the end it always succeeds in overcoming or overthrowing these obstacles. It is useless to try to keep up with jealous and also legitimate solicitude the national spirit of each people; commerce knows how to combine the great interests which they have in common, thanks to which all nations only form one universal family. As far as trade is concerned, diversity of language is no barrier, as they can be learned; distance is annihilated, or, at least, reduced to its narrowest limits. For the most part, trade asks little from the State, as it is accustomed to settle its own difficulties in its own way, and the State rather hinders it in its movements. But there are two things which it needs most certainly and most imperatively; one is rapidity and exactitude in its relations, the other is legal security.

Of these various bureaus, now located in what may be regarded as the incipient capital of the Continent, the first, which was established in 1865, related to telegraphs. The second was the Postal Union, which was established in 1874; while the bureau dealing with trade-marks and patents was founded in 1883, and its function was extended to deal with copyrights in 1886. The International Railway Bureau, over which M. Droz presides, was the latest born of all, having only come into existence in 1890. The motive which led to the foundation of these bureaus was in all cases the same. Telegraphs, post-offices and railways had

relations with each other before they established a common centre to act both as a clearing-house and as a supreme court of appeal for the settlement of their various differences, just in the same way as the present governments of Europe have relations with each other. But before the conventions establishing the bureaus were not established without considerable caused almost as many questions as those which at present exist between neighboring States in the political sphere. M. Droz says:—

Letters used to pass from one administration to another, by each of which a tax was imposed, and this caused expense and delay. It was the same with telegraphic messages. There was no international protection for inventors, proprietors of trade-marks, or authors. And with regard to railway transport, new regulations were found at every frontier, the times of delivery were not the same, indemnities in case of loss or damage depended on the caprice of officials; it was impossible to discover who was in fault, or against whom a charge could be made. It was the most utted juridical confusion.

It is the difficulties of the world which pave the way for the solutions of its problems. But for our difficulties we should make no progress—a salutary doctrine which is a constant consolation to the reformer. These bureaus were not established without considerable misgivings, and even now, although they have functioned and functioned well for years, it is necessary for them to be very prudent, since the respective administrations of the various States are as jealous of their autonomy and as prompt to resent any infringement

of their sovereignty as if they were high contracting parties dealing with territorial or political rights. Nevertheless, they have managed in spite of those jealousies and misgivings to do very good work—do it so quietly that hardly any one knows it is being done at all. As all these bureaus are founded upon the same general principle, it is reasonable to expect that the United States of Europe will probably follow the same road in the evolution of the Continental organization. M. Droz says:—

All the common features of these various Unions depend upon agreements, the wording of which is decided at conferences, partly technical and partly diplomatic, which meet from time to time to inquire into the changes and improvements which can be introduced into the general regulations. All of them, with the exception of that which has to do with railway transport, are concluded for an unlimited period, and the States can accede to them or withdraw at any time, by a simple declaration made to the Swiss Federal Council. With regard to the railways, on the contrary, the length of time is from three years to three years, and the States may be consulted about the adhesion of new members. This last point is very important considering the interests which are at stake. It would not be desirable to have in the Union railways which are either insolvent, or belonging to countries whose law and whose law courts did not offer the most complete security.

The cost of these international offices is very small. In 1896 the cost of the four was altogether only 370,000 francs, or, let us say, £15,000, a sum which is divided proportionately among the various States. In the railways, for instance, the charge is based upon the number of kilometers under the control of the Con-

vention. The importance and the nature of the functions of these international bureaus, which may be regarded as *avant-couriers* of the United States of Europe that is to come, may best be studied by briefly describing each of them with some detail.

Beginning with the Telegraphic Bureau, M. Droz says:—

> The working agreement applies to forty-six countries, containing 846 millions of inhabitants. It requires that States should have a sufficient number of direct telegraphic lines, for international telegraphy; it recognizes the right of every person to make use of them; it guarantees the secrecy of all communications; it fixes the order of priority for the dispatch of telegrams, with regard to their nature; it authorizes the sending of messages in cipher; it settles a universal charge, which is based, for European countries, on groups of three, ten, or fifty words, and for lands beyond the ocean, on the single word; it accepts the franc as the unit of coinage; it undertakes to send rely-paid and registered telegrams.

The bureau has many duties. Its first task is to collect, to co-ördinate and to publish information of every kind relating to international telegraphy. In discharging this duty, it publishes a general map of all the great telegraphic communications of the world, and other maps more detailed, one for Europe and the other for the rest of the world outside of Europe. It publishes a telegraphic journal, and carefully edits and re-ëdits a list of the telegraph stations of the world. These stations now number 80,000, and as they are constantly changing, it is no wonder that the list is now in the sixth edition. This is not so heavy a task

as that which is undertaken by the Postal Union Bureau, for there are 200,000 post-offices in the world. The bureau, therefore, it will be seen, acts as a kind of intelligence department for the telegraphs of the world. Incidentally the bureau has undertaken a task which, although a very long way removed from that of the construction of a cosmopolitan language, nevertheless points in that direction.

In passing on to the Postal Union, it is interesting to note that the formation of this International Bureau was first mooted by the United States of America even before their great Civil War was over. It is not less suggestive that the proposal, although made in 1863, led to no result beyond the publication of resolutions as to desiderata in postal administration which had no binding effect on any of the parties who took part in the Conference. Nevertheless, these desiderata being definitely formulated and agreed to as desirable by the representatives of the various Powers, a foundation was laid, upon which the Union was founded eleven years later. The first Postal Conference was held in Paris; the second, which was summoned on the initiative of Germany, met in Berne, where an inscription in black marble commemorates the signing of the Convention which established the 2½d. rate for all letters within the limits of the Postal Union. It marked the transition of an organization previously organized upon a particularist national basis to the wider and more rational status of a cosmopolitan institution. At the present moment the Postal Union includes fifty-

nine States, or groups of colonial possessions, containing, roughly stated, 1,000,000,000 inhabitants. The bureau serves as a clearing-house between the administrations; it is perpetually engaged in settling disputed questions which arise and points as to the question of interpretation, and it also acts as a kind of arbitral judge on litigious questions between the various administrations. In this case also it is very important to note, with a view to the future international development of the United States of Europe, that it is possible to refer questions to the bureau for its opinion without entering into any preliminary obligation to abide by its decision.

The Administration which deals with "intellectual property" was founded by the Convention of Paris in 1883; and it now includes sixteen States, with a population of 305,000,000 inhabitants. There is no need to describe its operation at length. Their nature can best be understood by the following statement of the services which the bureau is prepared to render:—

If, therefore, you have ever any need of precise information concerning industrial property which you cannot obtain elsewhere, here you have an almost gratuitous source—the cost is one franc per consultation—a source at once impartial and exact. In 1896, this bureau received or sent out 1,554 communications in connection with its inquiry department.

Another institution which places this bureau in direct contact with the public is that dealing with the international registration of trade-marks. The special arrangement relative to this is at the present time binding on nine States: Belgium, Brazil, Spain, France, Italy, Holland, Portugal,

Switzerland, and Tunis. If you wish to protect a trade-mark in these countries, you may, after having registered it in the federal Bureau, send it t othe international Bureau, together with a sum of 100 francs. This means a saving of time as well as of money, obviating, as it does, the necessity of registering in each separate country.

The Union for the Protection of the Rights of Authors includes thirteen countries with 534,000,000 inhabitants.

In the fourth great organization, which deals with International Railways, England has no part. There are only ten States represented on this International Institution, viz: Germany, Austria-Hungary, Denmark, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Holland and Switzerland. The network of railway thus submitted to the jurisdiction of the bureau is 173,000 kilometres. It deals at present only with the goods traffic; but already the Russians, who somewhat oddly (according to English ideas) seem much more frequently to take the initiative in progressive internationalism than England, suggest that passenger traffic should also be placed under the control of the bureau:—

The Convention is remarkable in this, that it unites all the European railroads belonging to it in one network of rails, worked under a common tariff as regards international transport, and in such a manner that all the managing departments are conjointly answerable, the one with the other, as regards any goods they have undertaken to carry, so that any one can sue either the sending or receiving agents without taking into consideration on what part of the system the damage or delay arose. Definite sums have been fixed in case of loss or damage, or if there is delay in delivering goods, for the mutual claims of sender and receiver, for the

demands of the customs, etc. All that concerns the transport of merchandise is arranged in so complete a manner that Swiss federal law has been copied word for word from the Convention.

The bureau has a list of 2,000 international tariffs to publish and a catalogue of all the railway stations open to international traffic, of which there are about 45,000. The International Railway Bureau is practically an international arbitration court dealing with great institutions, whose revenue is considerably greater than that of many States:—

It acts as an umpire to shorten litigation between different administrations when the different parties desire it. Here we have an institution which is of quite a novel character, and which is of great interest—a permanent tribunal instituted to regulate international differences.

Generally speaking, railway bureaux arrange their disputes by special arbitration for each department of traffic. But for all that, interesting cases are brought before the permanent tribunal.

These judicial functions, and those by which the Central Office has the right of intervention, at the request of one of the parties concerned, to arrange matters which have been left in abeyance, are destined in time to become more important still. It is impossible to forsee the establishment of a Court to facilitate monetary arrangements between different administrations. When the institution, which is still in its infancy, has developed, there is no doubt that new departments will come into existence, and that those which already exist will develop still further. For instance, Russia has proposed to regulate the transport of travellers and of merchandise, and this proposal has been already taken into consideration by the administration.

M. Droz dwells with natural and patriotic pride on the fact that these bureaus, domiciled in Switzerland

and officered almost entirely by Swiss, have nevertheless succeeded in functioning to the satisfaction of all the States whose interests they represent. It is a fact of good augury for the future pacific evolution of the Continental organism. To have assisted in the development of these centres for international organization is one of the services which Switzerland has rendered to mankind. Is it, then, too much to describe Berne, capital of Switzerland and headquarters of so many international administrations, as the incipient Capital of the United States of Europe?

Another potent factor in human progress is the international *wagon-lit* which has hitherto attracted little attention from the statesman or the philosopher. It is a dumb thing, the *wagon-lit*, a dull, mechanic thing, inanimate, with neither heart, soul, conscience, nor reason, but nevertheless it has achieved results which prophets and apostles and poets and seers have despaired of. Its fatherland is co-extensive with the metal track of the Continent, and every time it passes it erases, although with imperceptible touch, the frontiers which divide the nations. It is, indeed, the highest example of human ingenuity in the matter of a locomotive dwelling-place. What the Atlantic steamer is to the ocean, the *wagon-lit* is to the solid land. Its passengers no sooner cross its threshold than they become citizens of the world in a very real sense. Not even the humble snail of the hedgerow is more completely self-contained than your traveller in a *wagon-lit*. He has his own apartment, his bed-chamber, his

dining-room, his lavatory; the whole country is spread out before him on either side, in one endless gallery and panorama of living pictures. He can be alone or in society as he pleases. He can take his constitutional by walking down the long corridors while the train is speeding along at the rate of forty or fifty miles an hour. The conductor waits upon him as a *valet*, the *chef* cooks for him, all manner of wine is provided for his delectation, he lives in a peripatetic palace as comfortably and as luxuriously as he could do in any hotel on the Continent. For him even the barrier of the *douane* is, if not abolished, at least minimized, and in many cases the examination of luggage is made on the car without any necessity for carrying of packages across the barrier to the place of revision.

Compare for one moment the ease with which I travelled around Europe, using the international *wagon-lit* wherever it was accessible, and the difficulties with which any monarch or prince of the blood would have had to deal only one hundred years ago in making the same tour. Neither in speed, in comfort, nor economy could the greatest monarch in the world have traversed the same distance which a plain plebeian now covers without the slightest sense of strain or of physical exertion. Locomotion has really become not so much an exercise as a luxury, and instead of regarding a journey of a thousand miles as an enterprise entailing exertion and exposure, we have come to regard it as more or less a mode of recuperative recreation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EUROPEAN CONCERT.

No more signal instance of the possibility of momentary aberration on the part of statesmen and peoples can be imagined than the extraordinary way in which Mr. Gladstone and many of his followers took to blaspheming the European Concert in the last years of his life. All the cheap wit of the newspaper men of the world was launched upon the European Concert: it was slow; it was unwieldy; it might be a steam-roller, but a steam-roller which was stuck in the mud. A perfect hailstorm of criticisms and witticisms held up to ridicule and contempt what was, after all, the only principle which the European nations have yet discovered for the regulation of their joint affairs without bloodshed. Apart from its humanitarian aspect, the great political merit of Mr. Gladstone's Eastern agitation of 1876 to 1878 was due to his advocacy of the principle of the European Concert, and the gravamen of his impeachment of Lord Beaconsfield's harum-scarum Jingo policy was that he had wantonly destroyed the great instrument by which any improvements could be effected in the East. Lord Salisbury, fortunately, learned his lesson well, and through good

report and through ill he has cleaved to the principle of concerted action in dealing with the Eastern Question. In that Concert we have not only the germ of the United States of Europe, but an actual evolution and realization, although still very imperfect, of the conception of a federal centre of the Continent, which can not only deliberate, but on occasion can act. The New Year has opened auspiciously with the triumph —tardy but nevertheless genuine—of the principle of concerted action in Crete. The four Powers, acting in concert, have at last succeeded in expelling the Turkish troops from Crete without the exertion of any more than police force. There have been no pitched battles, and the Crescent has given place to the Cross without any of the desperate trials of strength between the Turk and the Greek which have marked the concession of autonomy to every other Turkish province. There were massacres, no doubt, which might have been avoided; but there was no war: there was only an operation of police. There is in the settlement of Cretan affairs a welcome precedent, indicating the road along which humanity has to travel.

When the United States of Europe come into organic being as complete as that already enjoyed by the United States of America, they will still need armed forces to execute the decisions of the Federal Government. It will be an international police rather than an international soldiery. Mankind passes through regular stages in its progress towards peace. First, there is the primitive state of universal war, in which every man

is free to slay his fellow-man, if he can and if he will. From that stage it is by a natural process of easy gradation that we arrive at a period when the right of levying war is practically confined to powerful individuals, feudal chieftains and the like. They exercised the right of private war, which degenerated in many cases into brigandage, out of which Europe emerged, thanks to the evolution of the soldier. The trained fighting man of the central power, whatever his faults may be, nevertheless represents an immense stride in progress from the armed bands of the soldiers of fortune and feudal chiefs who filled Europe with bloodshed in the later Middle Ages. We are now on the verge of the next step of evolution—the conversion of the soldier into the policeman. The final stage, of course, will come when humanity has attained such measure of moral development as to stand in no need of coercive authority at all, when every one, as the American humorist puts it, "can do as he darned well pleases," but when every one will only please to do what is right and just to his fellow-men. That ultimate ideal of the Christian and of the Anarchist lies far ahead, but on the road thither stands the evolution of the soldier into the policeman. But this will not be attained until the United States of Europe have come into formal and juridical existence. In Crete we can see it on the way. Crete also has established the great principle that the unity of the European Concert is not destroyed when a couple of its members refuse to take any active part in giving effect to its decisions. We

are therefore within measurable range of seeing the establishment of a real federated Europe which will not be crippled by the principle of the *liberum veto.*

At one time there seemed a great danger that this mistake would be committed. By the *liberum veto,* in the old Polish kingdom any one member of the Assembly could defeat any proposition by simply uttering his protest. In like manner it has been held that the six Powers must all keep step or they can do nothing at all. The necessary consequence was that the Powers were often reduced to impotence. But this is a passing phase. Sooner or later—probably sooner than later—it will be discovered that the *liberum veto* will be as fatal to Europe as it proved to Poland. In the European Areopagus decisions will have to be taken without absolute unanimity, and in this, as in other things, the minority will have to yield to the majority. Of course, each of the great Powers will always have a sovereign right to go to war to enforce its protest, if it should feel so disposed; but there is a very great difference between going to war to enforce your veto and securing the rejection of any proposal by simply recording your dissent.

In this respect, Mr. Gladstone took a very significant initiative in the year 1880. No one had insisted more strongly upon the maintenance of the European Concert as the one weapon with which it was possible to extort anything from the Sultan. But when Mr. Gladstone took in hand the task of enforcing the provisions of the Berlin Treaty, he found that one or more

of the Powers were disposed to hang back. He succeeded with great difficulty in mustering an international fleet in the Adriatic for the purpose of inducing the Turk to make the necessary cession of territory to Montenegro, but when the question arose as to what further measures should be adopted to enforce submission to the demands which Europe had formulated, France and Germany drew back. Russia and Italy supported Mr. Gladstone's generous initiative. Mr. Gladstone had then to decide what should be done. If he had adopted the *liberum veto* theory of the Concert, and had meekly acquiesced in the doctrine that nothing should be done unless all the Powers were agreed as to what that something should be, the Turk would have snapped his fingers at the Powers, and vital clauses of the Berlin Treaty would never have been executed. But Mr. Gladstone fortunately was made of different material. All the Powers had agreed as to what should be done. The Turk himself has signed the treaty which ceded territory to Montenegro and Greece. There was, therefore, unanimity of opinion as to what should be done; there was only difference of opinion as to how to carry it into effect. France, Germany, and Austria hung back, but Mr. Gladstone, with Russia and Italy at his back, decided to seize the Turkish custom-house at Smyrna, in order to enforce the Sultan's submission to the mandate of Europe. The three Powers which abstained did not, although they murmured and held aloof, absolutely veto any such action on the part of their allies. Had

they done so, it would have been difficult for Mr. Gladstone to proceed, for Europe would then have been equally divided, three against three. As the matter stood, the three who were bent on action did not allow the refusal of the support of the others to paralyze their action. If in 1896 Lord Salisbury could have secured the support of two other Powers, it is possible that he would have dealt as drastically with the Turk as Mr. Gladstone. Unfortunately, in the recent crisis we had not even a single Power at our back, and some of the Powers were believed to be ready to oppose our isolated action even by force of arms.

Under these circumstances, with a strong majority in the European Council Chamber against action, the minority can only submit until such time as it has converted itself into a majority. It is probable that for some time to come the European Concert will continue to insist upon unanimity in defining the proposals which are to be made to the Turk, but the method of securing compliance therewith will be decided by a majority vote.

We have come very near adopting this principle in the case of Crete. When it became evident that submission to the will of Europe in Crete would entail expense and would mortally offend the Turk, Germany withdrew and was followed by Austria. They did not actually protest against the enforcement of the decree of Europe, but they repudiated any responsibility, and declined to take any share in the active

operations. Undeterred by this shrinking from the logical consequences of their acts, the four Powers went on, and succeeded in putting the matter through, although not, unfortunately, until the conscience of England had been stirred up by the slaying of several of our own soldiers. These details, however, will shrink out of sight when the historian of the future comes to describe the evolution of the United States of the Old World. The broad fact is that the six Powers having decreed, the four Powers carried out the decree. When success was achieved, the spokesman of the abstaining Powers publicly approved of what was done, and remarked that four Powers were probably a more effective instrument than six in enforcing a policy agreed upon by all. It is an awkward question whether the four Powers would have ventured to put the thing through, if the two, instead of merely deserting, had taken up an active policy of protest against any further military or naval action in Crete. Such an attitude at some future crisis will probably test the cohesion and the determination of the majority of the European Powers.

Everything points in the direction of Europe having so much to do in providing for the liquidation of the Ottoman Empire that the six foreign ministers of the great Powers will become more and more a European Cabinet, who will learn the habit of working together under the daily pressure of events. If so, it would seem as if the Turk were going to make amends in the final years of his reign for the innumerable atrocities

which have been his chief resource in government since the time he entered Europe. For if Europe can be accustomed to act practically as a unity, it will in time bring about the United States of Europe, which will be none the less welcome because it will be born of mutual fear and distrust rather than of brotherly love and neighborly confidence.

In the old myth, when Jupiter bore Europa across the sea, he landed her in the Island of Crete, where she bore three sons—Minos, Sarpedon, and Rhadamanthus. It was a curious coincidence that a European army commissioned by the six great Powers, and acting under the collective orders of Europe, should for the first time have made its appearance on the Island of Crete. But the coincidence was of happy omen, that the new Europa may bring forth, if not Minos the lawgiver, and Rhadamanthus the inexorable judge, at least a system of international law which will be interpreted by an international tribunal.

In discussing elsewhere the question as to the forces which would tend to bring the United States of Europe into the most visible and tangible existence, I pointed out that there were two elements that were needed if the Federation of Europe was to be attained by the same road as that by which other federations had been brought about on a similar scale:—

The first and the most necessary is the existence of some extraordinary force sufficiently powerful to necessitate the union of those whose existence it threatens. In other words, in order to found a Kingdom of Heaven it is necessary that you must have an effective working Devil. John

Bull in the eighteenth century with the incarnation of evil, in protest against which the American Union came into existence.

In our own century it was the menace of French aggression which alone possessed sufficient force to overcome the centripetal tendencies of the German peoples. Where are we to find an adequate Devil to overcome the force of inertia as well as the more active elements of national rivalry and race antipathies, so as to bring about the federation of Europe? The other element which is lacking is a central power sufficiently strong to compel the recalcitrant States to come into the alliance. Of course it is a nobler ideal that free and equal States should voluntarily, of their own goodwill, unite on a basis of absolute independence. But human nature is not made that way. There is usually a recalcitrant minority which needs to be compelled to volunteer. Nearly every European State, England not excepted, represents the result of a process in which a strong central power had gradually crushed all rivals and established authority which is now recognized by consent, by the summary process of beheading or slaughtering those whose devotion to their private and local interests led them to refuse to co-operate in the larger unity. The most helpful analogies are to be found in the United States of America and the Republic of Switzerland. There the federation was established by the co-operation of the sovereign States without the need for the intervention of any predominant central power; but alike in Switzerland and the United States, the federation which began in goodwill had to be enforced by the armed hand, and we need not be surprised if the United States of Europe only gets itself into material existence after considerable bloodshed. That, however, is a detail, and it is a thousand times better that men should be killed in order that their corpses should pave the way to the reign of law, than that they should be slaughtered merely to perpetuate the existing anarchy. In looking round for the necessary devil whose evil influence is strong enough to compel the European States to federate, we fail to find any excepting our old friend the Assassin at Constantinople.

The Turk, I admitted, although evil, was hardly important enough to play the great rôle; and yet, failing him, I did at that time not see where to find any other. The second indispensable condition was to find a leader who would marshal the forces making for union and lead them to victory. Two years ago it seemed doubtful whether such a leader could be found. Last year brought us light on both subjects, for it brought us a leader in the person of the Tsar, and in his Rescript he indicated a danger quite sufficiently grave to overcome the force of inertia, as well as the more active elements of national rivalry and race antipathies. In the year 1897 Lord Salisbury himself—a man not given to indulge in day-dreams—put an unerring finger upon this sore point. Speaking at the Mansion House on November 9th, 1897, after dwelling upon the ever-increasing competition in armaments among the nations, Lord Salisbury said:—

The one hope that we haves to prevent this competition (in armaments) from ending in a terrible effort of mutual destruction, which will be fatal to Christian civilization—the one hope that we have is that the Powers may gradually be brought together to act together in a friendly spirit on all subjects of difference that may arise, until at last they shall be welded together in some international constitution which shall give to the world, as the result of their great strength, a long spell of unfettered commerce, prosperous trade and continued peace.

That was Lord Salisbury's one hope. When a year later the Peace Rescript of the Tsar appeared, it was evident that it was a hope equally entertained at St.

Petersburg. Except in international action, there was no hope of escaping from a peril which, unchecked, would overwhelm civilization in ruin. I marvel at my own blindness when, writing in 1897, I failed to perceive what was plainly manifest under our very eyes. Compared with the catastrophe so clearly foreseen and described by the Tsar, the dangers involved in the partition of the Ottoman Empire fade into utter insignificance. My only excuse is that I was no blinder than the majority of mankind appear to be even to-day when the clarion call from St. Petersburg is echoing through the world. So now we have the necessary stimulus in the revelation of a visible danger, and at the same time we have at the head of the family of nations a ruler young enough, brave enough, and enthusiastic enough to undertake a task from which the rest of his contemporaries have shrunk in despair.

I do not claim for Nicholas II. of Russia that he towers aloft above his contemporaries, or that he, who is the most modest of men, has any aspirations to play the rôle of the founder of the European Commonwealth. I only say that he, more than any sovereign in Europe, has the eye to see and the courage to say the essential truth of the situation. It is probable that he himself but dimly realizes whither his initiative will lead him. The British people who, in Seeley's famous phrase, "founded an empire in sheer absence of mind," are the last people in the world to demand that those who do great things should know before-

hand what they are about. But if the Emperor does not see it himself, it is plain enough to all the rest of the world, and will, in due season, make itself manifest to him also, that if the ideals set before the world in his Rescript are to be achieved, it will be done by following the well-worn path which leads to the federation of the Continent.

This is not the only century in which the idealist has dreamed of a Continental State and sovereigns have labored for the realization of the sublime conception of a federated Europe. The ideas associated with the Amphictyonic Council have haunted as will-o'-the-wisps the imagination of successive generations of mankind. Under the Cæsars, western, southern and central Europe was rough-hewn into an effective imperial unity. All the greater Popes had the vision of united Europe, and most of them, seeing that no one else grasped the great conception, sought sedulously to confer upon the chair of St. Peter the hegemony of the Continent.

Mr. Edwin R. Mears in the *New England Magazine* recently summarized in a series of articles the suggestions made by eminent thinkers for securing the peace of the world. Here, for instance, is his account of the great design of Henri IV. in the very last years of the sixteenth century:—

Henri IV., acting in concert with Queen Elizabeth in her old age, conceived the plan of what he called the Christian Commonwealth, to be formed among the Powers of Europe. His plan in brief was this, to reduce the number of European states, much as the Congress of Vienna eventually did two

hundred years afterwards, or so that all Europe should be divided among fifteen powers. Russia did not then count as part of Europe; and Prussia was not then born. Of these Powers, six were the kingdoms of England, France, Spain, Denmark, Sweden and Lombardy. Five were to be elective monarchies, viz.: The German Empire, the Papacy, Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia; and there were to be four republics—Switzerland, Venice, the States of Holland and Belgium, and the Republic of Italy, made up somewhat as the kingdom of Italy is now. These fifteen Powers were to maintain but one standing army. The chief business of this army was to keep the peace among the States, and to prevent any sovereign from interfering with any other, from enlarging his borders, or other usurpations. This army and the navy were also to be ready to repel invasions of Mussulmans and other barbarians. For the arrangement of commerce, and other mutual interests, a Senate was to be appointed of four members from each of the larger, and two from each of the smaller States, who should serve three years, and be in constant session. It was supposed that, for affairs local in their character, a part of these Senators might meet separately from the others. On occasions of universal importance, they would meet together. Smaller congresses, for more trivial circumstances, were also provided for. . . . According to Sully, at the moment of Henri's murder, he had secured the practical active cooperation of twelve of the fifteen Powers, who were to unite in this confederation.

The immediate aim of this arrangement was to humble the overweening power of Austria, but the further purpose was to secure permanent peace. One hundred years later, in 1693, Wm. Penn brought out his "Essay Towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe, by the Establishment of an European Diet, Parliament or Estates." Penn's fundamental proposition was, in his own words:—

The sovereign princes of Europe, who represent that society or independent state of men that was previous to the obligations of society, should, for the same reason that engaged men first in society, viz., love of peace and order, agree to meet by their stated deputies in a *general diet, estates or parliament*, and there establish rules of justice for sovereign princes to observe one another; and thus to meet yearly, or once in two or three years at farthest, or as they shall see cause, and to be styled *the Sovereign or Imperial Diet, Parliament, or State of Europe*, before which sovereign assembly should be brought all differences depending between one sovereign and another that cannot be made up by private embassies before the session begins; and that if any of the sovereignties that constitute these Imperial States shall refuse to submit their claims or pretensions to them, or to abide or perform the judgment thereof, and seek their remedy by arms or delay their compliance beyond the time prefixed in their resolutions, all the other sovereignties, united as one strength, shall compel the submission and performance of the sentence, with damages to the suffering that obliged their party and charges to the sovereignties' submission.

It will be observed that Penn was not afraid of that "blessed word compulsion." In this respect he distinguishes himself from most of the "peace at any price" people who are generally eager to consider themselves his followers. But Penn was a statesman with actual and intimate knowledge of affairs. Just as many nowadays quote the precedents of the United States, so Penn referred to Sir William Temple's account of the United Provinces of Holland "as furnishing a practical illustration in narrow limits of that constitution which he would have extended to cover all Europe."

Yet another hundred years and Immanuel Kant published in 1795 his "Towards Eternal Peace," of which the leading ideas were local autonomy and world-wide federalism, or the federation of self-governed States. There is a strange periodicity about these great dreams of universal peace. At the end of the sixteenth century, Henri IV.'s "Great Design"; at the end of the seventeenth, Penn's "Essay"; at the end of the eighteenth, Kant's "Zum ewigen Frieden," to be followed at the end of the nineteenth century by the Imperial Rescript of the Emperor of Russia.

Even the Napoleons, the first as well as the third, saw the coming of Europe afar off, and each in his own way labored to bring it to birth. The first, a Mars who had clutched the thunderbolt of Jove, stormed across the Continent, crumbling beneath his mail-clad feet whole acres of feudal masonry which cumbered the ground. The offspring and the Nemesis of the Revolution, he was the greatest leveller the Continent had ever seen. The third Napoleon, whose favorite occupation he himself defined as devising solutions for insoluble problems, dreamed much of the possibility of reconstituting some kind of federation of Europe. It was this cloudy notion that prompted those continual proposings of conferences with which he used to trouble his hand-to-mouth contemporaries. Nor was it only in kings'courts or in Imperial or Papal Councils that the great idea brooded over the minds of men. It was the theme of the poet's song, of the saint's devotions. It inspired much of the swelling

rhetoric of Victor Hugo. It was the burden of the prophetic vision of Mazzini.

And now this far-off, unseen event, toward which the whole Continent has been moving with slow but resistless march, has come within the pale of practical politics, and on the threshold of the twentieth century we await this latest and greatest new birth of Time.

CHAPTER V

EUROPA

I had the good fortune to be in Berlin two years ago. A great capital is always a great inspiration. And Berlin, with its heroic associations of past wars, is more inspiring than most of the younger cities of the world. But that which impressed me most on this visit was the new building of the Reichstag, which had not been completed the last time I was in Germany. It was not the building itself—although that is imposing, if rather squat, with noble equestrian statues standing boldly against the sky—but the political fact which it represented. Here under one roof, around the same tribune, gather in peaceful debate the representatives of as many States as those which now make up the anarchy of Europe. It is the fashion nowadays to speak of language as if it were a tie closer than all others. But the belief in the unity of the Fatherland because of its common speech is hardly a century old, and long after Arndt had embodied the idea in verse, German fought German with the utmost indifference to the German tongue. The intense individuality of the German, his tendency to construct a special theory of the universe entirely for his own

use out of his own consciousness, made the German races the most intractable material for empire-building on the Continent. They fought each other for the love of God; they fought for the pride of place; they were capable of fighting for a theory of irregular verbs. They were divided, and sub-divided, and re-divided again into kingdoms, principalities, duchies, and all manner of smaller States. Every ruler was as touchy as a Spanish hidalgo about his precedence, and no miser ever clutched his gold with more savage determination to keep and to hold than every German princelet maintained to the uttermost the princely prerogative of making war and peace. Not even the constant pressure of foreign peril sufficed to overcome the centrifugal tendency of the German genius. Again and again the wiser heads amongst them had devised more or less elaborate plans for securing German unity. After the fall of Napoleon, the best that could be done was the Bund, which was almost as provoking in its deliberative inaction as the European Concert is to-day. But the Bund perished at the sword's point, to be succeeded by the North and South German Confederations, which in turn disappeared when the victories over France rendered it possible for the Prussian King to be proclaimed German Emperor in the Palace at Versailles. Since then unified Germany has been at peace. Germany has become a unit, and the Reichstag, although sorely distracted by the fissiparous tendency of the German parliamentary man, has been the parliament of the United Empire.

How long will it be, I wondered, as I wandered through the building of the Reichstag, before unified Europe has its Parliament House, and the Federation of Europe finds for itself a headquarters and a local habitation for a permanent representative assembly? What Germany has done, Europe may do.

The union of Germany has not resulted in the disarmament of Germans, neither would the Constitution of the United States of Europe lead to the disarmament of the Continent. But no German now buckles on the sword with any dread lest he may have to unsheathe it against a brother German. The area within which peace reigns and the law court is supreme is now widened so as to include all German lands between Russia and France. That is an enormous gain. If we could achieve anything like it for Europe we might be well content.

The progress of mankind to a higher civilization has been marked at every stage by the continuous widening of the area within which no sword shall be drawn and no shot fired save by command of the central authority. In pure savagery every individual is a sovereign unit. The mateless tiger in the jungle is the most perfect type of the first stage of human individualism. Whom he will or can he slays, and whom he will or must he spares alive. His appetite or his caprice is his only law. He has power of life and death, and the sole right of levying war or making peace without reference to any other sovereignty than his own. From that starting-point man has gradually

progressed by irregular stages across the centuries, until the right to kill, instead of being the universal prerogative of every man, is practically vested in about twenty hands—so far as white-skinned races are concerned. The first step was the substitution of the family for the individual as the unit of sovereignty. War might prevail *ad libitum* outside, but there must be peace at home. After the family came the tribe. After the tribe, the federation of tribes for purposes of self-defence or of effective aggression. Then came the cities, with the civic unit. From time to time a despot or conqueror, driven by sheer ambition, established an empire, which, however imperfect it might be, maintained peace within its boundaries. Then nations were formed, each with their own organism and each allowing at first a very wide latitude for private and local war to their component parts. In our own history, not even our insular position prevented our forefathers, long after they had achieved some kind of nominal unity, preserving with jealous eye the right of private and provincial war. By slow degrees, however, the right to kill has been confined to even fewer and fewer hands. The mills of God have ground as usual very slowly, but those who took the sword perished by the sword, and the pertinacious asserters of the ancient inalienable right of private war were converted from the error of their ways by the effective process of extermination at the hands of a stronger power, determined that no one should wield the power of the sword but itself. In Germany to-

day in place of a hundred potentates, each enjoying the right to kill, William II. is the sole War Lord.

And as it is in Germany so it is elsewhere. The right to kill in Europe are even fewer than the six "Thou shalt not kill" is concerned is now confined in Europe to William II., Nicholas II., Francis Joseph, Humbert, Victoria, and President Faure. These are the lords of the first degree, whose right to kill is practically absolute. After them come the lords of the second degree, who are allowed a certain latitude of killing provided they can secure the neutrality of one or more of the War Lords of the first degree. There is a nominal right to kill enjoyed by all the kings of all the States. But as a matter of fact it cannot be exercised except in alliance with one or other of the greater Powers. Greece thought that it was possible to exercise this nominal prerogative of independent sovereignty. Her experience is not such as to encourage other small States to follow her example.

But in reality the persons who have the unrestricted right to suspend the Decalogue so far as the command absolute war lords. Europe is now practically divided into two camps. There is the Russo-French Alliance, entered into for the purpose of restraining France from precipitating war, which practically gives Nicholas II. a veto upon the right of levying war enjoyed by the French Republic. On the other hand, there is the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria, and Italy, which practically renders it impossible for Austria or

Italy to go to war without the permission of William II. Between these two Alliances there is the British Empire. In Europe, therefore, the right of levying war is vested almost solely in the Queen, her grandson, and her granddaughter's husband. Nicholas II., William II., and Victoria—these three are the Triumvirate of Europe. And as the late Tsar said to me at Gatschina, "If these three—Russia, Germany, and England—hold together, there will be no war." So far, therefore, we have come in our pilgrimage to the United States of Europe, that the power of the sword, which last century was a practical reality in the hands of a hundred potentates, is now practically limited to three persons, without whose permission no gun may be fired in wrath in the whole Continent.

No reproach is more frequently brought against me than that of inconsistency. It is the most familiar of the jibes which are flung at me by both friends and foes alike when they differ from me, that they never know what I am going to be at next, and that I am everything by turns and nothing long. These reproaches and sarcasms I have borne with the equanimity of one whose withers are unwrung, for I happen to be in the fortunate position of a man whose opinions have been on record from day to day and from month to month for the last twenty-five years. To all such accusations there is only one answer: *Litera scripta manet.* It is quite true that I have infinitely varied the method by which I have sought to attain the ultimate ideal that at the very beginning of my journal-

istic career I set myself to realize. I have supported and opposed in turn almost every leading statesman, and I have from time to time thrown whatever influence I had, now on the side of Imperialism, and then on the side of peace, and I have done all this, and hope to go on doing it till the end of my time. But to base the charge of inconsistency on this continual change of tactics is as absurd as it would be to accuse a mariner of not steering for his port because from day to day and from hour to hour he tacks from side to side in order the more expeditiously to reach his distant port.

This question of the United States of Europe has been one of the ideals towards which I have constantly, in fair weather and in foul, directed my course. Nineteen years ago, in the critical election of 1880, it was my lot to draw up an electoral catechism which was more widely used as an electoral weapon by the party which issued triumphant from the polls than any other broadsheet in the campaign. In this catechism I formulated my conception of the English foreign policy in terms which, after the lapse of nineteen years, I do not find necessary to vary by a single syllable:—

Question: "What is England's mission abroad?"

Answer: "To maintain the European Concert—that germ of the United States of Europe—against isolated action; to establish a Roman peace among the dark-skinned races of Asia, Polynesia, and Africa; to unite all branches of the English-speaking race in an Anglo-Saxon Bund, and to spread Liberty, Civilization and Christianity throughout

the world."—" The Elector's Catechism." General Election of 1880.

My last visit to Russia and the publication of this book are the latest efforts that I have made to realize the ideal which was clearly set out in the above sentence written in 1880. The conception in those days was confined to few, but nowadays the parties led by Lord Rosebery and Lord Salisbury would vie with each other in asserting their readiness to recognize the European Concert as the germ of the United States of Europe, and to develop the concerted action of six Powers in relation to the question of the East into a Federated Union of all the European States. It may perhaps be well worth while to form some idea of this new organic entity which it is the first object of our foreign policy to create. Are we repeating the crime of Frankenstein, or are we fashioning, like Pygmalion, a beautiful creature into which at the appointed time the gods will breathe the breath of life? In other words, what is this Europe whose United States we are seeking to federate?

Europe is a continent. It is hardly as yet a realized personality. There was a fair Europa in the mythology of the ancients, whom Jove loved, and whose story once suggested to Tenniel the idea that John Bull might aspire successfully to play the part of the Father of gods and men. But outside mythology there is little personification of Europe. The symbolical group at the base of the Albert Memorial, representing Europe as one of the four continents, is

almost the only effort with which we are familiar in England.

But such personification of a Federation of States is possible enough. The United States of America form a federation which has its recognized symbolical embodiment in Columbia and its humorous personification in Uncle Sam. The British Empire is a conglomerate far more heterogeneous and wide-scattered than the United States of Europe, but we have our symbol in the heroic figure of Britannia and our familiar personification in John Bull. The German Empire, to take another illustration, is also a conglomerate of kingdoms and duchies and cities; but the first great effort of German art to express in permanent form the triumph of German arms in the attainment of German unity was the erection of the colossal statue of Germania upon the wooded heights of the Niederwald, where she still keeps watch and ward over the German Rhine. But in all these cases it must be admitted there is a certain unity of national type which facilitates the task of personifying the federal combination.

The caricaturist, who often precedes the more serious artist in the selection and illustration of themes of national and international importance, has not been slow to seize the opening offered by the first crude, tentative efforts towards international action in Crete by portraying the European soldier as a fantastic conglomerate, a thing of shreds and patches, clothed in fragments of all uniforms. Not so will the artist proceed who endeavors to present before the world the

heroic proportions of her who, although the least among the Continents, is now, as she has been for two thousand years, greatest amongst them all. The Star of Empire which shone in the remote past over the valley of the Nile and the plains watered by the Euphrates has since the great day of Salamis been faithful to Europe. It may be that the new Continent of the West may yet challenge successfully the primacy of the older world. But except in alliance with Britain, no such challenge can be dreamed of for a century, and Britain is European as well as American, Asiatic as well as African. For as the Tsar is Emperor of All the Russias, so Her Majesty is Empress on All the Continents and of All the Seas.

There is a charming little poem by Russell Lowell entitled "The Beggar." The poet describes himself as a beggar wandering through the world, asking from all things that he meets something of their distinguishing characteristics. From the old oak he craves its steadfastness, from the granite gray its stern unyielding might, from the sweetly mournful pine he asks its pensiveness serene, from the violet its modesty, and from the cheerful brook its sparkling light content.

The idea is a pretty conceit, but it may help us to consider the distinctive qualities which the world may crave not in vain from the various component parts of this new composite entity, the United States of Europe.

It is indeed good to regard our sister nations with grateful heart, to contemplate the gifts which they

bring with them to the fraternal banquet of the peoples, and to realize, if only in imagination, what we should lose if any of the European States were to drop out of the world.

First among the States in area and in power stands Russia, the sword of Europe against the Infidel, for centuries the only hope and shelter of the Christian East. Upon the threshold of the Russian home burst the full horrors of Asiatic conquest. Time was when every wandering Tartar from the steppes rode as master and owner over prostrate Muscovy. But the storm of nomad savagery spent itself upon the Russian land, which, though submerged for a time, nevertheless saved Europe.

After a time the Russians threw off the yoke of the oppressor and entered upon their secular mission as liberators and champions of the Christian East. To their self-sacrificing valor the world owes the freedom of Roumania, the emancipation of Servia, the independence of Greece, and the liberation of Bulgaria. Not a freeman breathes to-day between the Pruth and the Adriatic but owes his liberty to Russia. Liberty in these Eastern lands was baptized in Russian blood freely spent in the Holy War against the Moslem oppressor. Nor is it only liberty in Eastern lands which owes a heavy debt to Russian sacrifices. As Russia in the Middle Ages received upon her ample breast the shock of the Tartar spears, and made for Europe a rampart with her bleeding form against the Asiatic horde, so Russia at the dawn of this century arrested

the devastating wave of Napoleonic conquest. The flames of her burning capital were as the star of the dawn to the liberties of Europe. Moscow delivered the death-blow to which Leipsic and Waterloo were but the *coup de grâce.* In later years Russia has done yeoman's service to the cause of humanity by bridling the savages of the Asiatic steppes and destroying slavery in the heart of Asia. She is now bridging the Continent with a road of steel, and from Archangel to Odessa, from Warsaw to Saghalien is maintaining with somewhat heavy hand the Roman peace. Russia has preserved in the midst of her dense forests and illimitable steppes the principle of co-öperative husbandry, of a commune based on brotherly love, and has realized the dream of village republics locally autonomous under the ægis of the Tsar. In the face of Asia, fanatically Moslem, and Europe, fanatically Papal, Russia has maintained alike against Turkish scimitar and Polish lance her steadfast allegiance to the Christian Creed. Her travellers penetrate the remotest fastnesses of Asia; her men of science are in the foremost rank of modern discovery; the stubborn valor of her soldiers has taught the world new lessons as to the might of self-sacrificing obedience; her poorest peasant preserves unimpaired the splendid loyalty and devotion of the Middle Ages; her writers of genius, like Turgenieff, delight the civilized world with their romances; her painters, Gay and Verestchagin, display a genius as great on canvas as her Rubinstein and Paderewski in music; while in all the

world to-day no voice sounds out over sea and land with such prophetic note as that of Count Tolstoi. There is in Russia, as in every other land, much that even the most patriotic Russians would wish absent; but who is there who can deny that, take her all in all, the disappearance of Russia as she is from the European galaxy would leave us poor indeed?

From the largest to the smallest, from the Empire of the plain to the Republic of the Alps, is but a step. Both are European. Who is there among free men whose pulse does not beat faster at the thought of all that Switzers have dared and Switzers have done? Here in the heart of surrounding despotism these hardy peasants and mountaineers tended the undying flame of Liberty, and century after century furnished an envious world with the spectacle of a frugal Republic, whose more than Roman virtue remained proof against the blandishments of royal ambition or the menaces of imperial power. William Tell may be a myth, but the legend that is associated with his name is more of a living reality than all the deeds of all the Hapsburgs duly certified by the official Dry-as-dusts. And Arnold von Winkelried, he at least was real both in history and in song, and for all time the story of his dying cry, "Make way for Liberty!" as he gathered the Austrian spears into his breast, will lift the soul of man above the level of selfish commonplace and inspire even the least imaginative of mortals with some gleam of the vision—the beatific vision—of the heroism of sacrifice. To-day, when the day of

storm and stress has given place to more tranquil times, Switzerland has become at once the political and social laboratory of the world and the play ground and health resort of Europe. Here at the base of her snowclad hills Europe cherishes as the *élite* of the Continent the intelligent and energetic democracy which defends its frontier without the aid of a standing army; and while lacking alike rivers, seaport, coal, and iron, has nevertheless proved itself able to hold its own in the competition of the world.

"Italia, oh! Italia, thou who hast the fatal gift of beauty," hast the not less priceless gift of associations of history and romance, before which those of all other nations but Greece simply disappear. The nation which boasts as its capital the city of the Cæsars can never yield to any other the primacy of fame. Europe once centred in the Eternal City. The unity of the Continent, as far as the Rhine and the Danube, was for centuries a realized fact, when the sceptre had not departed from Rome nor the lawgiver from the banks of the Tiber. Nor is the Italian claim to primacy solely traditional. For whatever may be the political power of the Quirinal as a world power, Italy makes herself felt through the Vatican. At this moment, in Chicago, public life is more or less demoralized because an Italian old man in Rome made a mistake in the selection of the Irishman who rules the great Catholic city of the West as the Pope's archbishop. And as it is in Chicago, so it is to a greater or lesser extent in every vast centre of population throughout the

world. But the Papacy, although more than European, is nevertheless a constant factor which must be reckoned with in discussing the evolution of Europe. The instinct of Leo is entirely in favor of peace and unity, but a firebrand in Peter's chair could easily perpetuate for another generation the armed anarchy of the Continent. Apart alike from politics and religion, Italy has always been a potent influence in promoting the growth of a wider than national culture, developing European rather than provincial interest. For centuries before Cook arose and a trip to the Continent became a thing of course, Italy alone possessed in her treasures of art sufficient attraction to induce men of every nation to brave the discomforts and perils of a Continental journey. From being the Mistress, Italy became the Loadstone of the Continent, and that distinction she has still preserved. To those treasure-cities of mediæval art which shine like stars in the firmament, reverent pilgrims every year bend their way as to most sacred shrines. But in every age, Italy, whether poor, distracted, and overrun by barbarian conquerors, or queening it as mistress over a Continent, has ever possessed a strange and magic charm. Dante was hers, and Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Savonarola—four names, the power and the glory of which are felt even where they are not understood, in the remote backwoods of America, or in the depths of the Australian bush. In modern times the revolutionary energy of the mid-century was cradled in Italy. Garibaldi restored to politics of the present day some-

what of the fascination which charms in the pages of Ariosto, while Mazzini revived in our latter day the primitive type of prophet-seer.

Nor must we forget, in paying our homage to Italy as Queen of the Arts and custodian of the great sites from which Pope and Cæsar in former times swayed the sceptre, spiritual and secular, over mankind, that Italy of the present day is peopling the New World more rapidly than any of her sister nations. While emigration from almost every other country has fallen off in the last decade of the century, that from Italy has increased until it amounts to well nigh half of the European overflow. If this be kept up, we may see a new Italy in South America which may be for the Italian language and the Italian race what New England has been for Britain in the northern hemisphere.

From Italy, which on the extreme south approaches almost to the torrid heat of Africa, I would turn to another land at the opposite extremity of the Continent, whose northern frontier lies within the Arctic Circle. Sweden and Norway, at present far removed from the troubled vortex of European politics, cannot vie with Italy in art or with Russia in political power, but none the less the sister States represent much which Europe could ill spare. We of the north land, at least, and all the teeming progeny that have sprung from our loins, can never forget the Scandinavian home from whence the sea kings came; and although our culture is largely Hebraic on one side and Hellenic

on the other, the warp and woof upon which the Hebrew and the Greek have embroidered their ideas is essentially Norse. Nor can we of the Reformed faith, at least, ever forget the heroic stand made on behalf of the Protestant religion by Gustavus Adolphus and the brave men whom he led to victory on so many a hard-fought field. Charles XII., too., that meteor of conquest and of war, supplies one of those heroic and chivalrous figures of the European drama whose romantic career still inspires those who live under widely different circumstances and under remoter skies. Norway is the only country in Europe which vies with Switzerland in enabling the dwellers in our great plains and crowded cities easy access to the sublimest mountain scenery. In the social and political realm, we owe to Gothenburg, a Swedish town, the most helpful of all the experiments that have been tried for the solution of the liquor traffic; while in the world of books there are to-day no three names more constantly on the lips of the librarians of the world than the three great Scandinavians whose fame is the common heritage of our race; Björnson in fiction, Ibsen in the drama, and Nansen in Arctic exploration.

Again turning southward, we find in Spain another of the nations which, in the flush of its Imperial prime, endeavored to realize the dream of United Europe. Spain at one time seemed destined by Providence to the over-lordship of the Old World and the New. Between Spain and Portugal the Pope divided the whole world which was discovered by the Genoese

sailor who was financed by Isabella of Spain. It is but three hundred years ago since Spain loomed as large before the eyes of Europe as Germany *plus* England would do to-day. Alike on land and sea there was none to challenge her supremacy. To-day Spain is the mere shadow of her former self, but even if the shadow itself vanished from the earth, the memory of the great days of Spanish chivalry when, like Russia on the east, she stood warden of Europe on the south, can never be forgotten. The chivalrous Moors, who have left the imperishable monuments of their presence in the fairy-like ruins of the Alhambra, were very different from the Tartar horde which nearly extinguished Russia; but the secular struggle waged against them equally called out the heroic qualities of the race. As the Moor was the anvil on which the Spanish sword was beaten until it became a veritable Toledo blade, so in turn Spain became the anvil on which our malleable English metal was beaten into the broadsword and trident by which we rule the sea to-day. Of all her possessions abroad, Spain to-day retains but a few straggling islets in the Eastern seas. But Spanish pride is as great to-day in the hour of national decline as when Spain was at the zenith of imperial prosperity. To European literature she has contributed two great names—Cervantes and Calderon—one of whom is to-day to the majority of us but a name and nothing more; while the other, Cervantes, has contributed to the literature of the world one of the dozen books which are read everywhere by every-

body in every language and in every land. To Europe of to-day Spain contributes little but an imposing tradition and somewhat of the stately dignity of the hidalgo, which the modern world, in the rush and tumble of these democratic days, is in danger of forgetting. Her authors are read but little beyond the Pprenees, her statesmen exercise little weight in European affairs, but in Castelar she contributed to the Parliament of Europe the most eloquent orator of the Continent.

How incredible it would have seemed in the sixteenth century had any one predicted that in the centuries to come Spain would be a Power of the third magnitude, while the Austrian Empire, shorn of all influence in Germany, would nevertheless rank among the half-dozen great Powers of Europe! But the incredible thing has come to pass, and Austria-Hungary, torn by domestic dissensions and threatened by powerful foes, continues to exhibit a marvellous vitality and indestructible youth. The land of the Danube with a dual throne, broad based upon a dozen races speaking as many languages—the Empire-kingdom is the political miracle of the nineteenth century. Mr. Gladstone once scornfully asked, "On what spot of the map of the world could we place our finger and say, here Austria has done good?" But the answer is obvious. Outside her frontiers she may have done as little good as England has done in eastern Europe, but within the limits of the Empire-kingdom Austria has rendered invaluable service to the cause of peace

and civilization of the semi-savage races whom she has tamed and kept in line. To act as schoolmaster, not on despotic but on constitutional principles, to Ruthenians and Slovaks, Poles and Czechs; to organize a State which is indispensable for European stability, out of such discordant elements as those which compose the conglomerate of Austria-Hungary, these are achievements indeed for which Europe is not ungrateful. The dual kingdom not only bears testimony to the possibility of creating an organic entity out of the most heterogeneous conglomerate of nationalities, it further affords the most signal illustration in contemporary history of the fact that States, like individuals, can find salvation by conversion when they truly repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Fifty years ago Austria was a byword to every Liberal. To-day there is hardly any State in Central Europe which has worked out so many problems of decentralization on constitutional lines as the Empire of the Hapsburgs.

Turning from the composite dual kingdom, we come to a State which in all things is the antithesis of Austria-Hungary. Austria-Hungary, although extremely diverse in its nationalities, is nevertheless, territorially, within a ring fence. The Danish nation, on the other hand, compact, homogeneous to an extent almost without parallel in Europe, a unity both in race, religion, and in language, is nevertheless scattered over a peninsula and half-a-dozen islands. In the State system of Europe, Denmark, with its handful

of population, can throw no sword of Brennus into the scale which decides the destinies of nations; but the nation marches in the van of European progress. Our farmers have learnt by sore experience the energy and initiative which have enabled the Danish peasant to distance all competitors in the markets of Europe. The nation, simple, honest, hardy, and industrious, free from the vices of caste, is one of the most conspicuous examples extant of monarchical democracy. The days have long gone by since Denmark held the keys of the Sound and levied tax and toll on the shipping of the world as it passed through the Baltic to the North Sea. But it is worth while remembering that the freeing of the Sound was an international act, which, as far back as 1857, foreshadowed the collective action of Europe. The royal House of Denmark, which has given a King to Greece, an Empress to Russia, and a future Queen to the British Empire, may fairly claim to be one of the nerve-centres of the Continent. Nor can it be forgotten that in Thorwaldsen, Denmark has the supreme distinction of producing a sculptor whose work recalls the sculpture of ancient Greece. But there are hundreds of millions who have no opportunity of visiting Copenhagen, and to whom the genius of Thorwaldsen is but a thing they have heard but do not understand. The one name which is above every name among the sons of Denmark, which is enshrined within the heart of every child in every land, is that of Hans Christian Andersen, whose fairy tales are the classics of every nursery,

and whose "Ugly Duckling" is one of the Birds of Paradise of the world.

We may not agree with Victor Hugo in describing Paris as the Capital of Civilization, the City of Light, but Europe is unthinkable without France. The nation which for centuries was the eldest son of the Church, and which in 1789 became the standard-bearer of the Revolution, has ever played the foremost rôle in European history. If in the last thirty years she has fallen from her pride of place, and no longer lords it in the Council Chamber, she is none the less an invaluable element in the comity of nations. The French novel has made the tour of the world, the French stage is the despair of all its rivals, and in painting and sculpture the French artists reign supreme. There is a charm about the French character, a lucidity about French writing, a grace about France generally, to which other nations aspire in vain. France is the interpreter to the continent of ideas conceived in Germany or worked out in practical fashion in English-speaking lands. In all the arts and graces of life, especially in everything that tends to make the most of the body, whether in the food of it, the clothing of it, or in the ministering to the universal instincts of the creature man, they leave the rest of the world helplessly behind. We English—a slow-witted race, who did not even know how to build a decent man-of-war until we captured one from the French and used it as a model in our dockyards—can never adequately acknowledge the debt which we owe to our

neighbors. They preceded us in conquest round the world; they were the pioneers of empire both in Asia and America. But the supreme distinction of France in the commonwealth of nations to-day is seldom or never appreciated at its full significance. France is the one nation in the world which, fearlessly confronting with remorseless logic the root problems of the world, has decided apparently with irrevocable determination that there are not more than thirty-nine millions of Frenchmen needed as a necessary ingredient in the population of this planet. Other nations may increase and multiply and replenish the earth, but France has made up her mind that, having reached her appointed maximum, therewith she will be content. No temptation, not even the continual multiplication of the surplus millions of German fighting-men on her eastern frontier, nor the envy occasioned by the immense expansion of the English race over the sea, is able to tempt her to forsake her appointed course. What is more remarkable is that this determination can only be executed by asserting the right of will and reason to control in a realm that the Church, to which all French women belong, declares must be left absolutely to the chance of instinct on pain of everlasting damnation. France may or may not have chosen the better part; but the self-denying ordinance by which she deliberately excludes herself from competition with the multiplying races of the world has an aspect capable of being represented in the noblest light.

France! heroic France! France of St. Louis and of Jeanne d'Arc, is also France of Voltaire and of Diana of Poictiers, of Molière and Dumas, of Louis Pasteur and Sarah Bernhardt! What other nation has produced so many of the highest realized ideals of human capacity on so many different lines? Even now, when the nation that built Notre Dame and Chartres Cathedral has taken to riveting together the girders which make the Eiffel Tower, France is still France, the glory and the despair of the human race.

Space fails me to do more than cast a rapid glance at the smaller States, each of which nevertheless contributes elements of vital worth to the great European whole. Much indeed might be said of Holland, that land won by spadefuls from the sea, protected by dykes and drained by windmills, in order to provide a level spot of verdure on which the most phlegmatic and industrious of mortal men could rear a sober commonwealth under a regal shade, and which, before it became a kingdom, had bidden high for the Empire of the Indies. Sea-power, now the sceptre of our sovereignty, was grasped by the Dutch before it was seized by the English. It was only in the last two hundred years that the Netherlands fell behind us in the race for empire.

Belgium, once the cock-pit of Europe, is now the most crowded hive of human industry. In no State are more men reared per acre, nowhere does patient husbandry win larger crops from indifferent soil; while in forge and factory and in mine the Belgian

workmen challenge comparison with the world. Belgian competition is pressing us hard in Russia, in Persia, and in many lands where Belgian goods were recently unknown.

At the other end of Europe there is Greece—a name, which, if nothing more than a name, is in itself an inspiration. The modern Greek, only too faithful an inheritor of many of the failings of his famous ancestors, has at least succeeded to the heritage of Olympus. No matter what may be his political feelings or his misfortune in war, the Greek is still the Greek, and behind the rabble rout of office-seekers which renders government impossible at Athens there still looms the majestic shades of those "lost gods and godlike men" which have kindled the imagination of our race since the days when Homer sang the tale of Troy divine. As the Acropolis is the crown of Athens so Hellas was the crown of the world, and that crown neither Turk, barbarian, nor the place-hunting politician of modern Greece can ever take away. The myths, the traditions, and the history of Hellas form the brightest diamonds in the tiara of Europe.

> **Earth proudly wears the Parthenon**
> **As the best gem upon her zone.**

There remain to be noticed but two of all the band of nations whose States will form the European Union —England and Germany. These two Empires, which are at present sundered by a certain jarring dissonance that is all the more keenly felt because their tempera-

ments and ambitions are so much alike, are the Powers naturally marked out for promoting the complete realization of the ideal of the United States of Europe. Some months ago I took the liberty of describing the German Emperor as the Lord Chief Justice of Europe. It is a rôle which he alone is competent to fill. No other potentate on the Continent has either the energy, the ambition, or the idealism capable of playing so great a rôle. Germany, which, after the travail of ages, has achieved her own unity, is of all the Powers the best fitted to undertake the leadership in the great work of completing the federation of Europe. Germany, also, from her central situation, is better placed than any other Power for undertaking the task. The traditions also of the Holy Roman Empire still linger around the Eagles of Germany, and the Empire is already the nucleus of a combination which places the forces of Central Europe, from Kiel to Brindisi, at the disposal of the Alliance. The Kaiser quite recently informed us that it is not his fault that more cordial relations have not been established between the Triple Alliance and France. As this is written he is about to visit St. Petersburg, when he will undoubtedly endeavor to draw closer the ties which unite Germany to Russia. Should he succeed in his endeavors, the attainment of a practical federation of Europe without England would lie within his reach.

But if Europe without France would be unthinkable, and if Europe without Germany would be Europe without the reflective brain and the mailed

hand, what could we think of Europe without England? It does not become me as an Englishman to say much in praise of my own people. But this I may say, that Europe without England would be Europe without the one Power the expansive force of whose colonizing and maritime genius has converted Asia and Africa into European vassals and has secured the American and Australian continents as receptacles for the overflow of Europe's population. And this also may be added, that Europe without England would be Europe without the one Power whose sovereignty of the seas is nowhere exerted for the purpose of securing privilege or favor for English flag or English trade. Nor must it be forgotten that Europe without England would be Europe without the one country which for centuries has been the inviolable asylum alike of fugitive kings and of proscribed revolutionists, the sea-girt citadel of civil and religious liberty, whose Parliamentary institutions have been imitated more or less closely by almost every civilized land. Europe without England would be Europe without her wings, a Europe without the sacred shrine where in every age the genius of Human Liberty has guarded the undying flame of Freedom.

The Federation of Europe at the present moment is like an embryo in the later stages of gestation. It is not yet ready to be born. But it has quickened with conscious life, and already the Continent feels the approaching travail.

It has been a slow process. The great births of

Time need great preparations. Under the foundations of the Cathedral of St. Isaac at St. Petersburg a whole forest of timber was sunk in piles before a basis strong enough for the mighty dome could be secured. The Federation of Europe is a temple far vaster than any pile of masonry put together by the hands of man. In the morass of the past its foundations have been reared, not upon the spoils of the forest, but upon generation after generation of living men who have gone down into the void from red battlefield and pest-smitten camp and leaguered city in order that upon their bones the Destinies might lay the first courses of the new State. Carlyle's famous illustration of the Russian regiment at the siege of Zeidnitz, which was deliberately marched into the fosse in order that those who followed after might march to victory over a pavement of human heads, represents only too faithfully the material on which these great world fabrics are reared.

Nor is it only the individuals who have perished by the million, in blind struggling towards they knew not what, which have supplied the substratum upon which the United States of Europe were slowly to be built. Political systems, laboriously constructed by the wisdom of statesmen and minutely elaborated to meet the ever-varying exigencies of their day, royal dynasties and great empires have all equally been flung into the abyss like rubble, after having served their turn to make foundation material for that which is to come. In preparing great political events Nature works with

the same almost inconceivable patience and inexhaustible profusion that may be witnessed in the formation of the crust of the earth or in the evolution of a highly organized species. For, as Ibsen has said, Nature is not economical. And in the preparation of the foundation of Europe she has hurled into the deep trench so much of the finished workmanship of preceding ages as to provoke a comparison with the work of the barbarians, who made hearthstones of the statues chiselled by the pupils of Praxiteles, and who utilized the matchless sculpture of the temples of the gods in the construction of their styes.

PART II

ENGLAND IN 1898

CHAPTER I

THE FASHODA FEVER

When I returned to England from my visit to the Continent, I was assured by a member of the Administration that the country had just passed through an outburst of "drunken Imperialism." The phrase, coming from such a conservative quarter, was very significant. Things must have been pretty bad before such a man in such a position could have expressed himself in such a fashion to a political opponent. And they seem to have been pretty bad, judging from the impression which the English newspapers produced upon those who read them abroad. To judge from the papers, and from the telegrams and letters in foreign newspapers which professed to give information as to how things were going in England, they could hardly have been worse in the great orgie of Jingoism, when Lord Beaconsfield was supposed to have brought back "Peace with honor" from Berlin.

I left England on September 15th, when the news

had arrived of the presence of Marchand at Fashoda—news which was generally known, although not officially confirmed. I came back immediately after the French Government had decided to recall him. I was therefore absent from England during the whole of the Fashoda fever, and my impressions of what took place during that somewhat excited period are necessarily the impressions of an onlooker from the outside. I saw England from the various foreign capitals with such lenses as were supplied by the telegrams in the foreign newspapers, and by the more or less belated English newspapers which followed me from place to place. Hence, whatever I say upon the subject must be taken, not as the judgment of one on the spot, who is on the inside track of things, but as a faithful expression of how things looked to foreigners.

The very day on which I left London I was assured by a prominent statesman, not in the Government, that we ought to be preparing for instant war with France. France had done "the unfriendly act," which, in diplomatic parlance, was equivalent to stating that she had picked up the gauntlet flung down at her feet by Sir Edward Grey, speaking on behalf of the Rosebery Cabinet. Therefore there was nothing for it but to sound the alarum and prepare for instant excursions, invasions and war by land and by sea all over the world. Lord Salisbury was staying at Contrexeville, displaying, in the opinion of his impatient censors, a criminal indifference to the peril of the Commonwealth. The night before I left Eng-

land I talked with one of the persons who may be regarded as perhaps the most directly responsible for the efficiency of our first line of defence. I asked him if he was preparing for instant war. He innocently asked, "With whom?" and on my replying, "France," he blandly answered, "Why?" When I said, "Marchand," he shrugged his shoulders. "Nonsense," he said, "Marchand is in the air; he will go away when he is told to. It is not serious; it might have been if the Khalifa had not been smashed, but as he is smashed, and Marchand lies in the hollow of our hand, it is nonsense to talk of war." Such were the opinions of an insider and an outsider—who would be recognized, if I were at liberty to give their names, as about the best authorities to be found in the country.

With such opposing views of best authorities in my wallet, I crossed the Channel, to find the moment I put foot in Belgium, that the Fashoda question had temporarily obscured that of the Peace Rescript. The brave Belgians were all agog to know whether or not England and France were going to war. Apart from the interest which they naturally felt in such a contingency, arising from the fact that a conflict between England and France would probably extend to the Rhine, when they would have to stand to arms in order to prevent the violation of their neutrality by the contending French and Germans, there was a more personal reason why the Belgians were interested in Fashoda. They had been roundly accused in the

English press of having connived at "the unfriendly act" of the French.

The case against the Congo State, as briefly stated by an English statesman, was that Captain Marchand had been allowed to invade and occupy Fashoda from the territory of the Congo Free State, although the Congo Government had formally recognized, together with Germany and Italy, that Fashoda was within the British sphere of influence, and that the British Government had publicly declared in the House of Commons that it would regard such an occupation as an "unfriendly act."

To this the Belgians replied hotly, and very much to the point—firstly, that declarations made in the House of Commons as to the way in which one Power will regard the possible action of another Power do not amount to the establishment of a state of war between these two Powers; and, secondly, that as long as no state of war exists, the Congo State is compelled by its constitution and the conditions imposed by the Powers to place no obstacle in the way of free transit through its territory. Further, they maintained that they had no knowledge of any intention of Captain Marchand to commit any unfriendly act by attempting to exercise any authority in any place within the British sphere of influence, and it was therefore absolutely impossible for them to have stopped him.

To this the objectors replied that the Congo Free State must have had a very shrewd notion of what Captain Marchand was up to, and that they ought to

have given our Government a friendly hint as to what was going on. To this the Belgians answered triumphantly, "And how do you know that we did not?" That is a question which our Foreign Office alone can answer—the Foreign Office and the Queen.

For everywhere and always when you begin to probe below the surface in foreign affairs, you come upon the all pervasive, subtle, and beneficent influence of the Queen. The King of the Belgians, who is in fact, if not in name, autocrat of the Congo, may or may not communicate the secrets of that Empire to the British Minister at Brussels. But it is an open secret that there are very few affairs of state upon which it is not his invariable rule to avail himself of the privilege accorded him by the tradition of his family of taking counsel with her Majesty. Every week, it is said, whenever the King of the Belgians is at home, he follows the example of his father by writing to the Queen. The first Leopold was the political mentor of the girl Queen. The second Leopold, having one of the shrewdest political heads in Europe, has always appreciated the advantage of profiting by the counsels of the aged lady who is the Nestor of the Sovereigns of Europe. It is probable, then, they say in Brussels, that if the King knew, the Queen knew; and if the Queen knew, we may depend upon it that the Sirdar was not taken unawares when the news came about the white men at Fashoda.

The King, who had just arrived from a yachting expedition to the Azores, in the course of which he

met with a slight accident which compelled him to keep his room on his arrival at Ostend, preserved a diplomatic attitude of nescience. In reply to my inquiry, I learnt that "His Majesty is totally ignorant of what has happened at Fashoda, and even whether anything has happened at Fashoda at all." The calm *nonchalance* with which the English assumed as a matter of course that if Marchand was at Fashoda he would have "to git," was a subject of amazement not unmixed with alarm.

"But it is war you will be making!" they said. "War!" we replied. "What nonsense! You don't call it war when a picnic party caught trespassing is courteously assisted to find its way home." "Oh, you English! Was there ever such a people!" was the exclamation, and there the matter stopped.

The French point of view, as stated to me repeatedly, was that the Southern Soudan was a kind of Tom Tiddler's ground, which England had abandoned to anarchy. So long as anarchy reigned on the Southern Nile, no declaration made by under-secretaries could deprive France of the right which she possessed as a civilized Power of restoring law and order when it was within the range of her armed hand so to do. The French repudiated as utterly untenable the theory that the sovereign right of any Power to exert its influence on behalf of civilization could be arbitrarily curtailed by the *ipse dixit* of Great Britain. Sir Edward Grey's warning had been promptly met by protest on the part of the French Foreign Office, and they main-

tained that we had no moral nor legal right to treat the derelict province in the Southern Soudan as shut out from all civilized influence merely because of our supposed reversionary rights. But the very people who took this position most vehemently were equally frank in declaring that after the stricken field of Omdurman the Marchand expedition was an anachronism, and the sooner it disappeared the better. "There is no one, believe me," said an eminent French journalist, who had excellent opportunities of knowing what he was talking about—"there is no one single Frenchman in the Government or out of it who does not know that after you reconquered Khartoum, Marchand's position became untenable, and the only question was how he was to be withdrawn. That is admitted on all hands; it ought not to be beyond the task of diplomacy to enable us to extract him without inflicting upon us a public humiliation. We made a false move and we admit it, and only wish to save our face." "And how can that be done?" I asked. "Oh, very easily," he replied; "it can easily be arranged; a little *pourboire!* Delcassé's position is rather serious. If he were to retreat under menace, it might bring down the Government, and we cannot afford to affront the Army by the public acceptance of any humiliation. We all heartily wish that Marchand had never reached Fashoda, but as he is there, we are equally anxious not to bring about a Ministerial crisis, or something that might be more serious than a Ministerial crisis, by our being compelled to eat humble pie. No, what is to

be done is very simple. You can either ignore the Marchand expedition, regarding it as only a mission of civilization, which you are glad to welcome to the territory under your dominion, or you can grant Delcassé a little *pourboire* in the shape of some more or less empty concession anywhere you like all round the world, anything that would enable M. Delcassé to claim a diplomatic victory which would save his prestige with the country. At the same time you would get all that you want." So said my friend, expresing therein the feeling of his nation.

In British official circles there seemed to be a general expectation that some such *pourboire* would be forthcoming, and that France would be let off cheap for having made a false move—"the unfritndly act"—just at the time when England had reëstablished her prestige by smashing the Khalifa at Omdurman. On the other hand, there was a general expectation among the bystanders, especially the Americans, that the matter would not pass over so easily. "You may depend upon it," said one keen observer, "John Bull will take it out of the French this time, mark my words if he does not. After all, human nature is human nature, and the old gentleman has stood so much, you can't blame him greatly, if having got the French in a corner, he gives them beans. Germany smacked your face in the Transvaal, Russia wiped your eye at Port Arthur, the Turk has drawn a long nose at you in Constantinople, the French have been tricking you

in Madagascar and worrying you on the Niger,—be sure John Bull will pay them out now, if only to set himself up again in his own conceit. Let the French out quietly—don't you believe it! They have got to be kicked down the front doorsteps with full musical honors." That, or something like it, was what my American friend said to me, and events, it must be admitted, subsequently justified his estimate of the situation.

The one easy and obvious way out of the difficulty was for Sir Edmond Monson to have accepted M. Delcassé's assurance that Marchand was only a missionary of civilization, to have welcomed him with effusion, to have declared that one reason why we had reconquered the Soudan was in order to open it up to such gallant explorers as Marchand, and to offer the adventurous little man all the assistance which all civilized Governments are called upon to render to shipwrecked travellers who may be stranded upon their coasts. Such an assurance could have been given with sufficient ironical emphasis to give the French clearly to understand that we appreciated to its full extent the unfriendly nature of the act which launched Captain Marchand on his bootless expedition. It would also have asserted in the strongest possible terms the inherent strength of our position, a strength so great that it was ludicrous to assume the possibility that half a dozen Frenchmen with a tricolor could possibly raise the Fashoda question by sitting down on a marshy island in the Nile under the cover of our guns, under

the shelter of our flag, and under the authority of the Sirdar.

An American Peace Commissioner, with whom I was discussing the matter in Paris, said that an infinite deal of nonsense was talked about this matter of the flag. "When I went to visit Mount Sinai I travelled with a *cortège*—bearers, escorts, etc.—and everywhere I always flew the Stars and Stripes. If the Sultan had been in a mind to pick a quarrel with me, he could have discovered that Uncle Sam was raising the Mount Sinai question because I had camped on the slopes of the famous mountain; but the Turk, not choosing to make a quarrel, ignored the flag, regarding it as the merely patriotic flourish of a traveller within his dominions. You could have done the same about Marchand if you had not wanted to pick a quarrel."

When I went to Berlin, and from Berlin to St. Petersburg, I heard the same kind of talk always. By the time I reached Russia the Government had published Sir Edmond Monson's despatches; and, to use the vulgar phrase, all the fat was in the fire at once. It was difficult on the other side of the Continent to follow all the details of things in England; but one fact stood out conspicuously—namely, that the forecast of the American observer had been a correct one: John Bull was about to compel the French to undergo public humiliation before Europe. The disadvantage of making the immense concession that a strolling Frenchman with a few yards of bunting could raise the Fashoda question seemed to have been overlooked,

compared with the advantage of having it out with the French. The Government having taken up this line, what could a patriotic Opposition do but support it? Nay, they rallied to the appeal all the more eagerly because of the opportunity which it afforded them of emphasizing their dislike of what they delighted to regard as the feebleness of Lord Salisbury's policy. Lord Rosebery led the way by a speech which showed that, although he had abandoned the leadership, he was still the leader of the Liberal Party. When he gave the word, great was the multitude of the preachers. Nearly every Liberal newspaper in the country wheeled into line, and of all the occupants of the front Opposition bench there was not one who ventured to dispute his authority.

In discussing this extraordinary unanimity with a very clear-headed Liberal friend, after my return, he replied, "What other course could we take? No doubt your phrase that we should treat Marchand's expedition as a picnic party and welcome him to the shelter and protection of the British flag was the simple, the natural, and by far the easiest way out. No one felt that more strongly than myself. But in order to avail ourselves of it, it was necessary that Sir Edmund Monson and Lord Salisbury should have taken that line from the first, and, as politely and ironically as possible, smothered with ridicule the preposterous idea that an explorer in difficulties could, by the mere process of setting up his tent on British territory, have raised any question about sovereignty, any

more than if he had set up his tent on Dartmoor. But, unfortunately for us, the Government did not take that line. When they published Monson's dispatches, they made France the present of admitting that the Fashoda question had been raised, apparently for the purpose of driving them out of it. Under these circumstances, what could a good patriot do? Surely nothing but what we did—namely, to insist that as Lord Salisbury had refused to take the short cut out, and had apparently made up his mind that the French had to be turned out neck and crop, the only thing that we could do was to bar the door against any more of those graceful concessions which would have made us ridiculous in the eyes of Europe and humiliated us before France. The fact was, the whole of the agitation in this country, from Lord Rosebery's speech downwards, instead of being a manifestation of confidence in the Government, was in reality the strongest possible illustration of the fact that we knew Ministers would not stand to their guns unless they were backed up from behind. If we had possessed a really strong Government, there would have been no need for bottle-holding them in the extraordinary fashion that was adopted; but, as we all knew our Salisbury, and knew that he would run away if he got the chance, it was necessary to adjure him by all our gods, every morning and every afternoon, that our unanimous opinion was backing him up, and that we would assuredly trample him under foot if he tried on any more of his graceful concessions. Believe me," said

my friend, "that is the *vérité vraie* of the whole affair. We had got a weak, fumbling Government, one section of which was always threatening war, and the other half was always backing down. We had stood that kind of thing till we could stand it no longer. Then you must remember that the French had been very irritating. They were firmly convinced that under no circumstances would Lord Salisbury stand firm. You could not talk to the politicians and journalists of Paris without feeling that they, one and all, had got the ingrained conviction that at the last moment Lord Salisbury's love of peace would overpower all other considerations, and he would give way rather than fight. So we upheld him, and barred the door in such a way behind him, that with the best will in the world he was shut up to war if the French refused to budge." That, no doubt, is the true explanation of the extraordinary rally of the Opposition, headed by Lord Rosebery, in support of an Administration concerning whose foreign policy each and all of the said "rallied," beginning with Lord Rosebery, had expressed publicly and privately their utter distrust and contempt.

The effect of these tactics on the Continent, so far as it came under my observation, was to create the impression that the English were spoiling for a fight, that they had France on the hip, and they knew it, and were determined to force her to accept the grim alternatives—Back Down or Fight! A friend of mine to whom I had written from St. Petersburg ask-

ing what chance there was of a national movement in favor of the Peace Conference, replied: "Your letter finds this city in a ferment," (he was writing on October 15th), "and all our people pouring oil on flame, which makes my heart half sick, half hot. A cry for the Tsar's policy or for peace to-day would only drive the swine more violently down the steep. But the day will soon come for a deliverance." Three weeks later, I received another letter from London, dated November 4th, in reply to a suggestion that something should be done to back up the Peace Conference in England. "Back up the Conference, you say! But I tell you the British lion is roaring at his loudest. I have never seen the noble brute so intractable; you must wait until the fever has passed out of the acute and delirious stage. I feel that this will not last. Lord Salisbury is the only man in England for your purpose, and he is *blasé* and sceptical. He ought to take John Bull by the throat; nobody else can! The Liberal Party is wholly useless—a fearful saying, but true."

When I got to Constantinople, I found that the general impression among the English there was entirely in accord with the estimate which I had formed of the situation in St. Petersburg; that is to say, they believed that an amount of fanfarronade had been made, apparently in order to force an open door, but really to force France to fight. Private letters from London showed that, however far Ministers and the responsible leaders of the Opposition might be from

desiring so great a crime, there were undoubtedly many among those who gave implse and momentum to the public movement who were passionately bent upon forcing on war. As one correspondent put it, "We are never likely to have such a chance again for settling old scores with France. It would be a thousand pities not to smash her, now we have got the chance." The chance, of course, consisted in the fact that the Russian Government was publicly committed to a policy of peace, that the raw which had existed for some years between London and Berlin had been healed, at least on the surface, that France was distracted by the passions excited by the Dreyfus case, and that the inferiority of her fleet was so notorious that the immediate result of a declaration of war would have been the disappearance of the French flag from the ocean.

When, in 1878, Lord Beaconsfield, having failed to fight his three campaigns against Russia for the deliverance of his friend and ally the Turk, made war on Afghanistan, a Liberal leader made a sarcastic remark which the recent clamor of the war party in England forcibly recalls to my mind. A gentleman was out driving one day, when his horse suddenly bolted and dashed frantically down the street. "Can't you stop him?" said the owner to his coachman. "No," said the Jehu, "he has got the bit between his teeth." "Then," said the gentleman philosophically, "take care and run into something cheap!" Last year France was alone, France was weak, France was

distracted by internal troubles; therefore she was cheap enough to run into. And so all the barbaric tomtoms of the unregenerate Jingo were set beating; and Alfred Austin, who may be regarded as medicine-man and witch-doctor, crisped the British lion's mane, and made him roar to his heart's content. To outsiders, who looked at the matter across the Continent, this blatant bellicosity of the public seemed somewhat cowardly, with too much of "hit him because he's down" in it altogether to minister to the self-respect of the self-regarding Briton abroad. But to others who approached it from a different standpoint the folly of it seemed even more conspicuous than its meanness. For, the moment it was known that Russia would not support the French in going to war about Fashoda, it was certain that France would yield, and all this tremendous pounding of heavy artillery secured for us no permanent advantage. Fashoda was in our hands, for the French occupation was an occupation *pour rire.* When France gave way, she abandoned nothing that she could possibly have maintained; whereas, the kicking of her downstairs with musical honors, while it gave us nothing that was not in our possession before we started, was not calculated to make France more easy and accommodating in dealing with us in a cause when she had a stronger case both in letter and in fact. In other words, the French would have gone out of Fashoda quietly if we had given them a little *pourboire;* whereas, now that we have insisted upon kicking them out publicly in the presence of the ser-

vants, the *pourboire* will have to be much larger. We may object, and swear that we shall never, never, never give any *pourboire;* but all negotiations are matters of give and take, and we may depend upon it the recent performance of the British lion has not been of a nature to make France more amenable to reason, or more desirous of straining a point in order to come to an amicable understanding with us on other questions where she is better able to hold her own.

When I came to Rome I found that opinions varied. Among our countrymen there were those who gave full expression to the feeling that it was high time to teach these French a lesson, and that we had been put upon so much that we should now put our foot down and show that we could fight, and so forth; while others were impressed by the frightful possibility of the general war which seemed to be so lightly hazarded by the war-mongers of the press. One acute observer said to me, when we were discussing this question under the shadow of the Quirinal, "It has been a great deliverance. You may not believe me, but I am firmly convinced that no power in Italy could have held the Italian people back from declaring war on France the day after the first French fleet had been swept from the sea. Any Ministry that attempted to check such a movement would have been swept away at once. The Italians would have felt that their chance had come, and they would have struck in a moment at their hated foe." This may be so, or it may not; but that the contingency was believed to be

not only possible, but probable, and even certain, was a grim reminder of the gigantic issues which trembled in the balance when our Government decided to reject the picnic-party solution, and elected to compel France, on risk of war, to atone for her "unfriendly act" by formally evacuating Fashoda.

The theory that John Bull has been bested every time for years past in his negotiations with his neighbors, and that in the struggle for existence and the scrimmage for the world he has been badly worsted, is one of those delusions which seem to indicate that a morbid hypochondriasis has taken temporary possession of a part of our people. There is one, and only one, region in which there are alarming signs of our not being able to hold our own. But, characteristically enough, this one serious danger is entirely ignored by those who are most prompt to sound the alarm. The notion that the statesmen and sovereigns of the Continent form their estimate of the fighting capacity of the British from the bellowing claque of London newspapers is one of the most extraordinary delusions that ever possessed the public mind. If anything were required to convince the Continental mind that English newspapers are utterly worthless, even as reporters of what is actually going on in their own country, there could hardly be a more striking instance than has been supplied by this Fashoda incident. For weeks, nay, for months, the British newspaper press stuffed its columns with the most alarming accounts of the feverish activity that prevailed in all our ar-

senals and dockyards. Every day brought forth new reports of fresh preparations for instant war. It was mobolization here, there and everywhere. The whole land seemed to be reverberating with the clangor of preparations for war. Again and again I was asked by most intelligent foreigners how many millions we had spent in making ready for war. I always shrugged my shoulders and said that I did not believe that the expenditure would exceed a hundred thousand pounds. The whole affair was a gigantic *mise-en-scène*, a game of bluff, played out to the end with astonishing intrepidity and nerve by gentlemen of my own profession, who felt it necessary to beat the big drum in order to keep their Government up to the mark. The utter amazement with which this explanation was received led me to justify the faith that was in me by two very important facts which had escaped public attention. One was that the Chief Constructor of the Navy, the man who has designed all our modern battleships, and who is the one man of all others whose presence would be indispensable at Whitehall were there any real question of the expenditure of millions on the Navy, was quietly enjoying his two months' holiday on Sir George Newnes's dahabeeyah on the Nile. The other was that the head of the Victualling Department, instead of working double tides at Portsmouth in order to make ready for war, was placidly enjoying his holiday under the sunny skies of Italy. No one believed me. They were quite certain that we were pouring out millions like water in order to

make ready for war. It was not, therefore, without a certain grim satisfaction that I noticed, when I arrived in Paris, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had found it necessary to make public statement of the fact that, so far from having spent millions, the extra expenditure upon all the amazing manifestations of activity which our newspapers had reported had only amounted to £50,000, chiefly incurred in replacing the stocks of coal which had been depleted owing to the strike in South Wales. After such an anti-climax, our newspapers will have to beat a very big drum a very long time before any one abroad takes rat-tat-too seriously.

The fact, of course, is that our Navy does not require any tremendous expenditure in order to prepare it for war. The story goes that Von Moltke, after having dispatched his famous telegram, "*Krieg, mobil!*" that launched the German armies upon Imperial France, was found by a friend amusing himself placidly as if nothing had happened. When his friend expressed his amazement, Moltke replied, "Everything has been arranged, mobilization is being carried out, there is nothing more at present for me to do." So it is with every well-equipped army or navy, and all this preternatural parade of fluster and fidget is an evidence, not of strength, but of weakness, a confession of unreadiness, not the calm composure of conscious strength.

Looking at England and the manifestations of English public opinion from abroad, it seemed as if the

country were suffering from a bad attack of fidgets. The element of John Bull's strength in times past has been due to the fact that he has been exceedingly tough, with a very robust faith in his own integrity and his own strength. The idea of good old John Bull caring a single straw for all the pin-pricks of his envious rivals is inconceivable. He cared no more for these things than his bovine prototype for the croaking of frogs in a marsh. But of late there seems to have grown up an astonishing school of hysterical patriots who imagine that they show their devotion to their country by the vehemence with which they bellow when any puny Frenchman pricks them with a pin or with a pen. It would do these gentlemen good to see a bull-fight in Spain. It might teach them, if they were capable of understanding anything, that the whole art and mystery of circumventing the bull is to make him mad by pin-pricking him till he loses his self-possession. Then he rushes down upon the sword of the matador. The angry bellowings, the pawing of the sand of the arena, the tail-lashing, and the savage and fatal final rush upon his tormentors, reproduce, only too faithfully, the way in which many of our journalists would conduct the foreign policy of England. In the hubbub of Fleet Street and the cheers of the music-halls these considerations are often lost sight of; but nevertheless it is equally true of nations as of individuals, "in quietness and confidence shall be your strength." If our Navy had been weak, there might have been some excuse for endeavoring to make

up for our feebleness by the shrilly outcries and barbaric war whoop of the savage. But as our Navy is strong enough to sweep any possible adversary from the seas, it would be more sensible, to say nothing of being more Christian, if our Mohawks would spend less time over their war-paint, and cease to make night and day hideous by their yells.

Of course, I shall be roundly assailed for saying monstrous things, in thus stating how the recent outburst of English feeling appeared to an Englishman travelling abroad. But the fact is as I have stated it. I shall be told, no doubt with perfect truth, that nothing was further from Lord Salisbury's mind and will than a war with France. That is undoubtedly true. In the sanity and sober sense of the Prime Minister the Empire has found a strong refuge from the violence of the Jingo faction. Neither would I for a moment assert that any responsible statesman, whether Liberal or Conservative, deliberately played for war, although most of them seemed to have taken the risk of war with a very light heart.

But it is not there that the mischief lay. When it was decided to publish Monson's dispatches, and practically to appeal for a patriotic demonstration against France, the Ministers called a spirit from the vasty deep to serve their purpose which they might have found it very difficult to cope with when they wished to dispense with its assistance. To excite the war passion in a people so warlike as the English is a crime against civilization, which can only be justified, as

homicide is justified, by absolute necessity. The occasion was tempting and the moment propitious for such an appeal. The Sirdar with his victorious troops, fresh from the reconquest of the Soudan, had arrived in England in the midst of the Fashoda fever. Not even the most envious rival could deny that Sir Herbert Kitchener had displayed in an eminent degree the great administrative and military qualities which have enabled men of our race to build up the British Empire. He had fought and won two great battles against a savcage foe, and he had reëstablished British authority in the city of the Soudan, which will be for ever associated with the greatest humiliation inflicted on England in our time. There was, therefore, ample explanation of the enthusiastic welcome with which he was received at home. At the same time, those who saw things from the outside could not help a certain feeling of regret at the lack of perspective displayed in the extraordinary demonstration with which the Sirdar and his men were received. What more could have beén done to mark our national gratitude and esteem if he had been Wellington returning from a ten years' death-grapple with the Despot of the Continent? Here, again, there was visible that absence of dignity and reserve which used to be so characteristic of our people. The almost Roman triumph which was accorded to the Sirdar naturally ministered to the passions which made a certain section of our people fall an easy prey to their besetting sin. Hence there sprang up many who openly and constantly talked of a

war with France. "Now is our chance; we should be fools to miss it. We shall never have such an opportunity again of settling with her once for all."

Shortly after my return, I was in the editorial office of a well-known newspaper, where we were talking about peace and war. The editor remarked that he was almost the only person on his staff who had not wanted to have "a slip into France," and appealed for confirmation to his assistant, who remarked that nine out of ten persons whom he met even then (this was at the beginning of December) were much disappointed that we had not "had it out with France." "You must be keeping very bad company," I remarked. "Not at all," he said; "I go in and out of the City a great deal, and certainly that is the impression that I gain from what I hear from the people I meet." "The City!" I exclaimed; "but the City of London, whenever a war fever is in the air, is one of the worst places in the world. Don't you know that when a war fever breaks out the devil always sets up his headquarters in the city. He has another favorite haunt—the clubs of Pall Mall; and he divides his time between the two." "Yes," said the editor, "and as he goes from one to the other, he must of necessity pass most of his time in Fleet Street." The observation was just, for of all energetic children of the devil the London pressman, like the journalist of Paris, when the cannon-thunder is in the air, is about the worst. It was so in 1878; it has been so in 1898. I was repeating this conversation to a well-known pub-

lic man, who smiled and added: "Yes, no doubt; the Evil One spends much of his time in perambulating Fleet Street; but he always has a chop and a cup of tea in Printing-house Square."

It would be an interesting subject for discussion as to how far the spectacle of the easy victories won by our American kinsfolk over the Spanish fleet tended to create, or at any rate to strengthen, this ground-swell of the lower passions of the English nature. Certainly, it seemed somewhat unnatural to English-speaking men on this side of the sea that English-speaking men on the other side of the sea should have won great sea-fights, and mopped up the navies of a moribund Latin Empire, while we, with the greatest fleet in the world, were standing by with folded arms, enduring the taunts of the *boulevard* press. The Old Adam is strong in the average Briton. His fingers began to itch for a fight, and the talk that has gone on, the echoes of which were still audible when I returned to England, showed an unmistakable readiness on the part of many of our people to fight, with or without a justification, should an opportunity arise, especially when it was what, in the slang of the street, might be regarded as "a sure thing."

This readiness on the part of our people to fight for mere fighting's sake is much better appreciated on the Continent than it is in England. At home we plume ourselves so greatly upon our love for peace, that many of us have actually come to the conclusion that John Bull when seen from abroad is a huge, fat, overgrown

sheep. Nothing could be further from the reality of things. A Russian poet once called us "the gray wolf of the Northern Seas," and that phrase embodies accurately enough the impression of other European nations as to our real character. We may hate war, but we have made more wars in the last fifty years than all the other nations put together. They might be little wars, but, nevertheless, they were wars. The chances that an English soldier will see action and kill his man are very many times greater than that a similar fate will befall any soldier on the Continent. As for ambition and aggression, there is not, in the opinion of Europeans, any Power in the universe that is so imperious and so aggressive as Great Britain. Of course, we repudiate this indignantly, but the cynical and sceptical foreigner shrugs his shoulders, and replies, "To begin with, you claim as your natural birthright the dominion of the seas—that is to say, two-thirds at least of the planet belong to you in fee simple. Next, if you look round the world, you will find that you have snapped up every bit of the land that is worth having either for colonizing or for trade. You have taken all the vantage spots of all the continents, and if any one of us ventures to pick up any of your leavings, there is immediately a howl raised throughout the English-speaking world, and imperious demands are made that you must immediately take something else, in order to balance our pickings. The net result is that though you started with much more territory abroad than all of us put together, you have gone on

multiplying your additions until there is practically nothing left for other people. As for Russian aggression, of which you are always talking, it is indeed a case of Satan reproving sin. In the last fifteen years, for every square mile of territory which Russia has annexed, you have annexed a hundred, and we might multiply that by a thousand if you were to take into account the spheres of influence which you have established." *

Yet, notwithstanding all this, which is no overstatement of things as they are, nothing is so common as

* Speaking on this subject when he resigned the Liberal leadership, Lord Rosebery said:—"You have acquired so enormous a mass of territory that it will be years before you can settle it, or control it, or make it capable of defence, or make it amenable to the arts of your administration. Have you any notion what it is that you have added to the Empire in the last few years? I have taken the trouble to make a computation which I believe to be correct. In twelve years you have added to the Empire, whether in the shape of actual annexation, or of dominion, or of what is called the sphere of influence, 2,600,000 square miles of territory. But just compare these figures. It will show you more clearly what you have done. The area of the United Kingdom—England, Scotland, aWles, Ireland, the Channel Islands, and so forth—is 120,000 square miles. Therefore, to the 120,000 square miles of the United Kingdom, which is the heart of your Empire, you have added in the last twelve years twenty-two areas as large as that of the United Kingdom itself. That marks out for many years a policy from which you cannot depart if you would. You may be compelled to draw the sword—I hope you may not be—but the foreign policy of Great Britain, until this territory is consolidated, filled up, settled, and civilized, must inevitably be a policy of peace."

to find in English newspapers perpetual lamentations over the extent to which we have lost our position in the world, owing, be it remarked, to our meekness, our patience, our unwillingness to fight, and scrupulous observance of our neighbors' landmarks!

I remember once being visited by a poor woman whose mind was diseased, and who came to inform me of a great and terrible disaster that had overtaken her. She referred to it in terms of such unaffected horror, that it was some time before I could induce her to tell me the nature of the terrible evil from which she was suffering. At last it came out. Owing to the machinations of a certain enemy of hers, who had practised his foul arts in order to injure her, the whole of her inside was undergoing a mysterious change by which it was being transformed into the inside of a dog. Nothing that I could say could persuade her that she was mistaken. To arguments and to ridicule she was utterly impervious; she knew that her inside was becoming a dog's inside, and the process would soon be complete, unless something—she did not know what—could be done in order to break the spell and restore her to her natural condition. I have often thought of this poor lunatic when reading English papers. They seem to imagine that, by some marvellous magical incantation of some wizard of peace, the whole of the interior of honest John Bull is being converted into the "innards" of a sheep. They are possessed with the idea, the thought of the transformation which they are undergoing has got upon their nerves, and in

order to counteract it they are continually clamoring for something to be done, some sabres to be rattled, or some drums to be beaten, or volleys to be fired. Not unless the cannon-thunder sounds in their ears, morning, noon, and night, can they be persuaded that they are not becoming the sheep of their imagination. It is a mental malady and a very distressing one, especially for their neighbors, who know that John Bull, so far from being a sheep at heart, is in reality one of the most pugnacious, self-assertive entities that the world contains. He is only too reckless with his fists, and only too regardless of his neighbors' toes.

Side by side with this pugnacious element, which is ever prompt to respond to outward stimulus, there is another characteristic of our people which is even more unlovely. There is, after all, a certain amount of heroism in the spectacle of a man who, in a good cause or ill, is willing to go forth and kill or be killed in support of his country's cause. But that element of greatness is absolutely absent from those who clamor for war much as the Roman mob clamored for gladatorial games in the Amphitheatre. Papers are dull unless there is some fighting going on somewhere; therefore, "the war for our money." Our people have not the conscription, and the people who write in the newspapers, as the Emperor of Russia once somewhat bitterly and sarcastically remarked, "are never sent to fight in the first line." It is now as it was when Coleridge wrote:—

> Secure from actual warfare, we have loved
> To swell the war-whoop, passionate for war!
> We—this whole people—have been clamorous
> For war and bloodshed; animating sports,
> The which we pay for as a thing to talk of,
> Spectators, and not combatants.

All the while that our people have been surrendering themselves to the unholy passion of military glory, and revelling in the thought that they were strong enough to whip France, and, in conjunction with the United States, to rule the world, they have been oblivious to the real danger which threatens our supremacy, nay, even our very existence as a nation. We are the workshop of the world; we do not grow food enough in our island to feed our people for more than one-third or one-fourth of the year. We earn our daily bread, literally in very real fashion, by the fact that we are able to command the markets of the world by the excellence of our manufactures, the skill of our workmen, and the cheapness with which we produce our goods. This is the base, the solid foundation of our Imperial grandeur. If the factory and the workshop are not busy, neither army or navy would be able to keep us in existence. Yet each of the three great conditions upon which our commercial ascendency rests is threatened without the mass of our people giving it even a thought. Whether it is in the excellence of our manufactures, the skill of our workmen, or in the economy of our methods of production, we are losing our premier position. Although we have been extending our Empire and pegging out claims for

future colonies and dependencies with the utmost pertinacity and courage, the tell-tale statistics of our foreign trade remain obstinately silent as to the commercial benefits which we have gained therefrom. A thousand pin-pricks, such as those which so irritated our journalists, are as nothing compared with the one portentous fact that for the last ten years our trade has practically remained at a standstill. The trade of Germany has increased; the trade of the United States has gone up by leaps and bounds, until it has now taken the first place in the world's records. But our trade remains stationary. Instead of concentrating our attention upon the removal of the causes which have enabled our competitors to beat us in our own markets, and gradually to threaten us with extinction in the neutral markets, we have fretted and fumed about prestige and "open doors" to *impasses*, and we know not what. The real weakness is that of the heart and the brain—of the interior, not of the remote extremities. We have grown too comfortable to exert ourselves and to hold our own in the real struggle for existence, which is waged, not in the battlefield, but in the markets of the world. We spend millions over armaments, and grudge thousands for education. We send military expeditions to the uttermost ends of the world, but grudge the expense requisite to make any careful or systematic use of the money which we devote for the promotion of technical education. Our trade is periodically paralyzed by insensate disputes between masters and men, the idea being that as it

was said that France was rich enough to pay for her glory, so we are rich enough to afford to play ducks and drakes with our business. For the moment all goes well; there is a boom in trade; the cry of the unemployed is no longer heard in our streets. But booms are temporary; depression follows inflation as night follows day, and then there will be an evil look-out for our people and for our country, unless our statesmen are wise betimes, and, turning their attention from the barren competition of armaments and of conquests, are, in the words of Count Muravieff, "to utilize for productive purposes the wealth which is now exhausted in a ruinous and, to a great extent, useless competition for increasing the powers of destruction."

CHAPTER II

THE CHINESE PUZZLE

The *causa causans* of my visit to Russia was not the Peace Rescript, which, at the time when I decided on my journey, had not appeared. My real objective was quite other than that. Ten years before, at the close of my audience with the late Emperor Alexander III., he invited me to return to Russia to see him again, should relations between Russia and England threaten to become strained. During his lifetime there was no occasion to act upon this invitation, but in the midsummer of this year it seemed as if the occasion had arisen which, ten years before, had been discussed as a conceivable but regrettable possibility.

Until the last year or two the one great source of difficulties between England and Russia was the slow decay of the Ottoman Empire. The difficulty of harmonizing our clashing interests, or what were believed to be clashing interests, in the east of Europe has sufficed for the last twenty years to employ the energies of the diplomats of London and St. Petersburg. Of late, the troubles of Turkish origin have steadily diminished. Russia under Prince Lobanoff went far in the direction of adopting the policy of Lord Bea-

consfield, by which the maintenance of the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire was treated as the interest of a civilized European Power. On the other hand, Britain, under the influence of Mr. Gladstone's enthusiasm, and the ever-increasing force of facts, had gone far towards adopting the traditional policy of Russia as protector of the Christians of the East. But neither country was sufficiently at home in its exchanged rôle to feel firm enough on the new ground to adopt any policy likely to bring them into collision in the Levant. When the Armenian atrocities reached their acute stage, the divergence of opinion between the two countries came to a head. But England was not sufficiently Gladstonian nor Russia sufficiently Beaconsfieldian for either Empire to push its views to such an extreme as to endanger the general peace. So the Armenians were sacrificed, and Abdul chortled in his joy over the paralysis of Europe, and blessed Allah for the efficient protection of Prince Lobanoff, who was not ashamed to wear on his Muscovite bosom a decoration which he received from the Great Assassin. But just when the good people who were willing to sacrifice hecatombs of Eastern Christians for the sake of a quiet life were congratulating themselves upon the fact that peace reigned in Armenia, another question rose in the Further East which threatened to revive and accentuate the differences between the two Empires. The rivalry of diplomatists, which had almost died out at Stamboul, shot up into new and intenser activity in Pekin. The Sick

Man of Europe ceased to command attention, for the eyes of the world were turned to the Sick Man of Asia, whose demise appeared to be rapidly approaching.

It was a false alarm, but for the time it lasted it was all the same as if it were true. Our experience of Turkey might have taught us to take the crisis in China a little more philosophically. At any time during this century the acutest observers of men and affairs at Constantinople have expressed their opinion that the Sick Man was very sick, sick even unto death. Sick he was, no doubt, and sick unto death; but his death was not yet. Over and over again has been repeated the warning which, nevertheless, we are constantly forgetting, that old empires which have lasted for hundreds of years are much too toughly put together to go to pieces like a pack of cards before the first flip of a hostile finger. Threatened empires, like threatened men, live long. Generation after generation of ardent souls have lived and died in the fervent faith that that great edifice of iniquity which the Ottoman horde reared upon human skulls and watered by human blood was about to pass away and defile the world no more; but the last year of the century finds the Turk still in possession of Stamboul, still lording it over the heritage of the Christian East, still living, and likely to live until all those who wish him dead and gone have themselves been gathered to the vast majority.

Notwithstanding this great object-lesson as to the tenacity of life in old-established empires, the British

public no sooner heard that the Chinese Government was sick, and very sick, than they incontinently jumped to the conclusion that the Sick Man of Asia was going to die, and that we must bestir ourselves if we wished to obtain a share of his intestate estate. As a matter of fact, the Yellow Man may be sick, but he is very far removed from the door of death. The cohesion and unity of that vast conglomerate of humanity which stretches from Siberia to Burma, and from the Yellow Sea to Turkestan, depends far more upon the moral influence of its Government than upon the material nexus of armies and navies and police; and a moral influence once firmly established over four hundred millions of men is far too deeply rooted to be pulled up like a garden weed by the finger and thumb of a victorious Power. No doubt the Chinese cut a very poor figure in the war with Japan. Their fleet vanished from the sea, their army was defeated in every battle, and they were compelled to cede to the victorious Japanese whatever their victor chose to demand. When the war was over, the Japanese found themselves in possession of the two great strongholds of Wei-Hai-Wei and Port Arthur, and all the world hailed them as the rising Power of the Far East. The blow to Chinese prestige in Europe and America was immense, but in China itself the loss of the fleet and the cession of the northern fortresses affected the dim myriads of yellow men in China about as much as the trimming of a man's beard affects his digestion. Probably ninety-nine out of every hundred never so much

as knew that a war had taken place, and those who had heard the rumor of hostility are probably to this day in a state of blissful ignorance as to which Power triumphed in the fray. The moral authority of the Government at Pekin remains as supreme—with never a soldier to back it or a gunboat to fly its flag—as it was before the war broke out.

All this was forgotten and ignored even by those who should have known much better. The Russians, it must be admitted, showed a sounder appreciation of the tenacity of Chinese vitality than did the other Powers. With the aid of Germany and France they cleared the Japanese off the Asiatic mainland and restored the territorial integrity of China. There the matter might have remained without any complication arising had it not been for the uncontrollable outburst of the colonial fever in Germany. The opportune murder of some German missionaries in the province of Shantung afforded the German Emperor a welcome pretext for seizing a portion of Chinese territory. Before seizing Kiao-Chau he cautiously approached the Russian Emperor by tentative inquiries behind which his real object was carefully concealed. Russia had the right of anchoring her warships in the port of Kiao-Chau. Would the Emperor object if Germany were to share that privilege? No direct answer was given at first, but ultimately it was understood that Russia would have no objection to share that privilege with Germany. So the first preliminary was gained. The second preliminary was to ascertain whether

Russia would have any objection to Germany's exacting reparation for the murder of her missionaries. The offhand answer was returned: "Certainly not. Russia could have no objection to the exaction of a reparation." With these two assurances, one relating to the anchoring of German ships in the harbor of Kiao-Chau, and the other to the exaction of reparation for the murder of German missionaries, the German Emperor made his great *coup*. Kiao-Chau was seized and occupied, at first under the pretext of demanding reparation for the murder of German missionaries. Not until afterwards was it revealed that the reparation demanded included the leasing or virtual cession of the province of Kiao-Chau to the German Emperor.

It is believed, and even to this day it is sometimes asserted, that the action of Germany in seizing Kiao-Chau was prearranged beforehand with Russia. Nothing could be further from the fact. The seizure of Kiao-Chau under the mask of a demand for reparation for the murder of German missionaries was, and is, bitterly resented in Russia as a bit of sharp practice of which they have ample ground to complain. So intense, indeed, was the irritation created by the mere suspicion of the German design, that I was told in Berlin a telegram had been despatched to Shanghai countermanding Admiral Diedrich's orders. Unfortunately the Admiral had sailed before the telegram arrived, and Europe was confronted with the *fait accompli* of the German occupation of Kiao-Chau. Nothing could have been more opposed to the wishes

of Russia. Russia's policy was the maintenance of the integrity of the Chinese Empire. In defence of that integrity the Japanese at the very end of a victorious war had been compelled under virtual threat of war to clear out of the Liaotong Peninsula; and now one of the Powers by which the integrity of China had been vindicated against the Japanese became herself the aggressor and despoiler of Chinese territory. If at that time Russia and England had but been on cordial terms of mutual confidence, it is probable that concerted action on the part of all the other Powers would have compelled Germany to discover that her occupation of Kiao-Chau was temporary and would cease the moment the Chinese paid compensation for the murdered missionaries. Unfortunately the Powers all mistrusted each other, and concerted action was regarded as out of the question. Even without concert the question was considered as to whether or not Russia should insist upon the evacuation of Kiao-Chau; and it was only when, upon grave deliberation, it was decided that Germany would not clear out without a war, that it was resolved at St. Petersburg to acquiesce in the inevitable and seek compensation elsewhere. The Russians may have been right, or they may have been wrong in their belief that the Germans could not have been turned out without a war. If they were right, no one can doubt that in their own and in the interest of the general European peace they did well to swallow the bitter mouthful and make the best of it. It is indeed difficult to believe that the

German Emperor or the German people would have accepted the frightful risk of a European war in order to persist in seizing a port on the Chinese littoral. But it is only just to admit that the opinion arrived at by the Russians as to the impossibility of turning the Germans out of Kiao-Chau except by a war shared by the best authorities in Europe.

Rightly or wrongly the Russians decided that it was not worth while to risk a war for the sake of Kiao-Chau; but it was felt that the action of Germany had materially changed the situation. It was no longer possible to maintain formally the integrity of China. That integrity had been violated by the "mailed fist" which had seized possession of Kiao-Chau. Germany had established herself in force, if not within striking distance, at least within easy proximity to Pekin. The example of the ease with which the Chinese could be plundered by any one who chose to pick their pockets was likely to prove contagious. No one knew what would be the next step. The signal once having been hoisted for the partition of China, it was felt at St. Petersburg that any day might bring the news of a fresh seizure of Chinese territory.

If by some exercise of imagination we could realize the conception of England which has been formed by, let us say, the King of Uganda, we should probably find that it would compare not unfavorably with the conception which the British public has formed about Russia. To the King of Uganda England is an entity, a unit. England's policy, whether for peace or

for war, for annexation or for evacuation, is to him the expression of a single will. He does not discriminate between Liberals and Conservatives, between Government and Opposition. He knows nothing of those details which are imperceptible from a great distance. Hence he has probably strange ideas concerning the vacillations, inconsistencies and bad faith of the Power with which he has to do. In the same way, while we speak about Russia, we imagine the great Empire of one hundred and twenty millions as a unit. We speak of its Government as if it were the will of a single man being brought to bear continuously upon the problem in question. In reality the Russian Government, like every other state, is a composite body. It is swayed from time to time by opposing tendencies which find their embodiment not in parties so much as in ministerial groups, which make themselves more or less articulate exponents of the contending drifts of sentiment. Hence there is often an appearance of vacillation or of inconsistency, and sometimes of downright bad faith, which would be perfectly understood if we could but abandon what may be called the "King of Ugunda" point of view in considering Russian questions. The way in which the Chinese question was dealt with after the seizure of Kiao-Chau is an apposite illustration of the inadequacy of the Uganda method for appreciating what actually happened. As soon as the German flag was hoisted over Kiao-Chau, the Russians with one consent believed that the one thing which they dreaded more than anything—a

scramble for the inheritance of the Sick Man of Asia —was about to begin, and their eyes turned instinctively to the one great Power whose armed force, constantly mobilized on a war footing, hovered within striking distance of Port Arthur.

Strange though it may seem to Englishmen who alternately plume themselves upon the pharisaical virtue with which they abstain from picking and stealing, and display a Nebuchadnezzar-like pride in having picked out all the plums from the world's pie, the Russians are firmly convinced that whenever there is a scramble for any corner lots in the universe, John Bull is dead sure to be first on the spot. Now there is one particular corner lot in China which the Russians could not and ought not to allow to pass into any other hands than their own. This particular corner lot in question was Port Arthur, with the related port of Talienwan. Port Arthur and Talienwan stand in pretty much the same relation to each other as the Spithead ports, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight stand to the docks of Southampton. Talienwan is the only ice-free port through which Russia can obtain access to the Pacific at all seasons of the year. It was therefore absolutely necessary for the future development of their vast Siberian Empire that the port of Talienwan should be available as the terminus of their great trans-Continental line. The reasonableness of this opinion had been publicly recognized by Mr. Balfour, who, in a famous speech, had declared that so far from England's having any objection to Russia's ob-

taining an ice-free port in the Pacific, nothing was more to be desired in the interests of British trade than that Russia should have such a port, and the British Government therefore regarded her natural ambition to have a port in ice-free waters with satisfaction and approval. The Russians naturally took note of this declaration with much satisfaction; and inasmuch as Talienwan was the only ice-free port along that coast, they regarded Mr. Balfour's speech as being equivalent to a virtual handing over of Talienwan to the Russion Government, whenever the railway had made sufficient progress to justify a demand for the cession of such a position on the coast. Here the Russians may have been mistaken or they may not. Mr. Balfour's words seemed to them sufficiently explicit; and no one who reads them to-day can marvel that the Russians took them to mean exactly what they seemed to say, for it is no use pretending that when you invite another Power to "have" a port, you mean that she is simply to enjoy in common with all the other Powers a right of way through a port belonging to someone else. It is well to bear this in mind, because it is the key to much, if not to everything, that happened in the spring of last year.

When the German flag was hoisted over Kiao-Chau, opinion in the Russian capital was divided. One section, which may be regarded as having its headquarters in the Foreign Office, held that it was absolutely necessary for the preservation of Russia's vital interests for her to forestall the attempt to seize Port Arthur on the

part of any other Power. This school maintained that England was certain to seize Port Arthur either directly herself or indirectly through the Americans or the Japanese. In any case, Port Arthur was much too valuable a jewel to be left lying about loose, with the signal flying from Kiao-Chau for the general scramble. That was the view of one school. An altogether different opinion prevailed in the section which had as its centre and head the Ministry of Finance. Here it was maintained that Lord Salisbury could be relied upon not to seize Port Arthur, and that Mr. Balfour, when he made his famous declaration as to the right of Russia to an ice-free port, was speaking in good faith, and meant exactly what he said. They maintained, therefore, that seeing the right of Russia to Talienwan had been recognized by England, and that Port Arthur was to all intents and purposes an integral part of Talienwan—for Port Arthur was untenable with Talienwan in other hands—it was better to let things remain as they were, to trust to England's declarations and to still hold on to the old formula of the integrity of China despite the inroad upon that integrity which had been made by Germany. This school violently opposed the occupation of Port Arthur. They contended that to occupy such a position would make Russia a partaker in the guilt and responsibility of the partition of China, the prevention of which had been the steady aim of Russian policy. They maintained that to occupy Port Arthur would set two signals flying, instead of one, for the partition

of China, and would challenge the other Powers, notably England, to join in the game of grab. It was further insisted upon with great force, and, as the result proved, with truth, that it would be impossible to take possession of Port Arthur without having to square the Japanese, and that this could only be done by the abandonment of Russia's vantage ground in Korea. Further, the railway was not built, and would not be built for some years, during which the *status quo* might remain. To occupy Port Arthur would at once make Russia vulnerable. It would entail an enormous expenditure, which the Treasury could ill afford, for arming of the ports, and a still more gigantic outlay in the building of a great Pacific fleet. In addition to all those arguments they had another, and perhaps the most powerful of all, in reserve. "The Chinese," they said, "will bitterly resent our occupation of Port Arthur, and they will confound us with the Germans as the despoilers of their Empire. Our strength throughout the whole of the Chinese Empire depends upon our moral influence with the rulers at Pekin. Our position at Pekin is not weakened, but rather strengthened by the jealousy and suspicion excited against Germany by the seizure of Kiao-Chau. Therefore let us severely abstain from any tampering with Chinese integrity. Let us emphasize our determination to maintain the integrity of the Chinese Empire against all comers. Let us push forward the construction of our railways, strengthen our commercial interests in China, and rely upon the good

faith of England to save us from the dangers of seeing Port Arthur and Talienwan pass under the control of another European State."

The balance of opinion at St. Petersburg was strongly in favor of this view. The Emperor for some time kept an open mind, with strong predispositions in favor of what may be regarded as the views of M. Witte as against those of Count Muravieff. This was natural for many reasons. He had travelled in the East. He had no sympathy whatever with the earth-hunger which seems to possess some people like a consuming passion. He wished to leave the Chinese alone. He deprecated anything that would lead him into collision with England. He was even painfully anxious to avoid saddling his treasury with any further expenditure for armaments and munitions of war. All the cards seemed to be in favor of the victory of Witte and the discomfiture of Muravieff. Unfortunately the whole scene was changed, and changed not so much by the action of the British Government as by the steps taken on their own initiative by the British Admiral and the British Ambassador. The Admiral acted innocently, never dreaming what momentous results would follow from the orders which he had given. It is, alas! impossible to say as much for the action of the Ambassador.

As will be seen from what has been said of the arguments of the contending schools of Russian statesmen, it was essential for the success of the non-annexationists that England's good faith should be undisputed,

and that there should be no doubt whatever as to the honesty of Mr. Balfour's declaration in favor of Russia having an ice-free port, which could only be Talienwan, to which Port Arthur was a mere corollary. On the other hand, the annexationists were keen to lay hold of any sign that would seem to prove the insincerity of the English Government, and to pounce upon anything that looked as if we were trying to wriggle out of Mr. Balfour's assurances.

It was at this particular juncture that the Admiral commanding the British fleet on the Pacific stations, "being moved thereto of the devil," as the old legal phrase goes, bethought him that it would be well to order some of his ships to call at Port Arthur in the course of their cruise round the Chinese littoral. This was well within the authority of the Admiral in command, nor did he in the least imagine when the ships were ordered to take up their station for a time at Port Arthur that any political significance would be attached to their arrival in the port. So little importance did he attach to the matter that he made no report on the subject, and neither asked, sought, nor received permission from the Government at home. He sent the ships to Port Arthur as he had previously sent ships to Kiao-Chau, and as he would send them to any other port where he could find safe anchorage. Such, at least, is the positive declaration of the British Government, which we, of course, implicitly believe. It can easily be imagined with what feelings the news of the arrival of British warships at Port Arthur was

received in St. Petersburg. The intelligence dismayed the non-annexationist and filled the annexationists with joy. "We told you so!" the latter cried exultingly, and immediately proceeded first to press their suspicions on the mandarins at Pekin, and then at St. Petersburg to point triumphantly to the presence of the ships as proof positive of our bad faith.

Our Ambassador, Sir Nicholas O'Conor, who was then, with the best intentions in the world, working hand-and-glove with the non-annexationist section, anxiously inquired as to why the ships were sent there, and, apparently as one result of his telegrams acquainting the Government with the exaggerated importance attached to the presence of these vessels, he received and transmitted to the Russian Government assurances as to the non-political nature of the visit of the ships, which may be found in the Blue Book. Meantime, the ships having stayed their time, sailed away, but the mischief which they had done lived after them. Still, the removal of the ships gave fresh heart to the non-annexationists, who renewed the battle; and they might have won the day, had it not been for the fatal move of Sir Claude MacDonald, our Ambassador in Pekin—a move which no attempt has ever been made to reconcile with ordinary good faith. The only excuse that is possible is almost inconceivable. It is difficult to imagine that the British Ambassador at Pekin was unaware of the fact that Mr. Balfour had publicly declared that the British Government en-

tirely approved of Russia having an ice-free port in the Pacific. Yet, except on that hypothesis, it is difficult to acquit the British Ambassador of an act of deliberate treachery infinitely worse than the worst that could be charged against Count Muravieff.

For what did he do? First, no sooner did he find that the Chinese Government was in difficulty about the negotiation of a loan, than he went to the mandarins at Pekin and offered to secure them a British loan on various conditions, one of which was that Talienwan (which, he was careful to explain in his telegram home, was the only ice-free port) should be made into a treaty port. The mandarins at once objected that Russia would never agree to this; but Sir Claude MacDonald insisted. "Why should the Russians object?" he asked, "unless they had designs which, if they objected to his proposal, would then be unmasked?" But there was no need for unmasking their designs. Their designs, if one may call them so, were frankly avowed and had been publicly endorsed and approved by Mr. Balfour, the Leader of the House of Commons and First Lord of the Treasury. The Russians regarded their claim to have Talienwan as a matter that had passed beyond the pale of controversy. It had been virtually made over to them, whenever they wanted it, by Mr. Balfour on behalf of the British Government; and yet, with this assurance fresh in their minds, they were suddenly confronted with the spectacle of the British Ambassador at Pekin endeavoring by the promise of a British

loan to bribe the Chinese Government into cheating them out of the indispensable port.

When this became known in St. Petersburg, the annexationists triumphed all along the line. Who could trust the English after that? Count Muravieff also, being anxious, it was said, to immortalize his family by bringing Russia to Port Arthur, as another Muravieff had brought Russia to the Amur, is said to have worked upon the Chinese by assurances more emphatic than accurate to induce them to request the Russians to occupy Port Arthur lest it should be seized by the English. The Chinese refused, but in such a way as to give Muravieff a colorable pretext for representing to the Emperor that the Chinese implored him to take Port Arthur. After this last *coup* the fate of Port Arthur was sealed.

I have entered at some length into this question, because it bears directly on the charge which is brought against Russia of having deceived us in the course of these negotiations. When the fate of Port Arthur was still in the balance, questions were asked at St. Petersburg as to the presence of Russian ships of war at the port, and we were assured that they were only there for winter quarters. This statement is constantly brought forward as a proof of Russian deception. But the fact is that if we had not thrown the whole game into the hands of the annexationists, the ships would only have been there for winter quarters, and would have left Port Arthur in the spring. The rampant Jingoism of certain sections of our press and

the bad faith of Sir Claude MacDonald rendered it impossible for the non-annexationists to hold their ground, so that what would in all probability have been only a sojourn for the winter, was converted into a definite occupation.

Then came the question whether or not Talienwan should be a free port or an open port. There was a misunderstanding on the English side, which is admitted in the dispatches, owing to Lord Salisbury's having mistaken the clear and definite statement made by M. de Staël that the port would be "open" as equivalent to its being "free." For that, however, the Russians are admittedly in no sense to blame. Before it was leased to the Russians, Talienwan was not open to trade. The immediate result of leasing it to the Russians was to open it to trade, subject to the provisions of the Treaty of Tientsin, by which the import duty was fixed at a maximum of seven per cent. Having gained this point, if therewith our Ministers had been content, a great deal of trouble would have been avoided. But unfortunately, from excessive zeal Sir Nicholas O'Conor deemed it necessary to raise the further question as to whether or not Port Arthur should also be an open port. Now from the public declarations of Her Majesty's Ministers, Port Arthur cannot be made a commercial port. It is essentially a military and naval position, corresponding to the Spithead ports and the Isle of Wight; and satisfactory answers having been given as to Talienwan, which corresponds to Southampton, there was neither sense nor reason

in declaring that Port Arthur should also be declared an open port. Unfortunately, however, instead of pointing this out, assurances were given of the readiness to make it open, which the Russians afterwards took back. Instead of justifying this taking back of their promise, which they could perfectly well have done on the ground that Port Arthur, according to Lord Salisbury himself, could not be made into a commercial port of any kind, Muravieff made statements which, if not intended to mislad, were, to say the least, very unfortunately phrased. From this misunderstanding, of which I have heard many explanations, none of which seem to me either conclusive or satisfactory, there sprang a popular belief that the Russians had wilfully deceived us, although what conceivable advantage they could have derived from such deception has never been clearly pointed out. The disadvantage was obvious enough. The Ministerial papers, almost without an exception, fumed and foamed and published day after day attacks upon the Government to which at last Lord Salisbury yielded, and ordered the occupation of Wei-Hai-Wei. Thus the third step was taken towards the partition of the Chinese Empire.

The advantage to England of the occupation of Wei-Hai-Wei still remains problematical. The disadvantages are obvious. To Germany it has been no doubt a gain that we should have thrust ourselves into a position which makes us partners with them in the partition of Northern China, partners who, however,

are precluded by our own voluntary protestations from attempting to derive any commercial advantages from the position. The only defence that was made was that it was necessary to advertise to Japan and the other nations that we were not out of the running, and that if Germany and Russia seized Chinese territory, we also were willing and able to take a part in the same game. It is stated—I cannot say with what authority—that the balance of naval authority was distinctly against taking Wei-Hai-Wei, and up to the present fortunately there has been no expenditure to speak of in the way of fortifying or garrisoning the place of arms over which our flag flies. Wei-Hai-Wei remains, and it is sincerely to be hoped will long remain, a *place d'armes*, as worthless for Imperial purposes as that other *place d'armes* in the Mediterranean, the filching of which, under the cover of the Anglo-Turkish Convention, is an indelible blot upon the good faith of Great Britain.

The irritation produced by these various seizures of Chinese territory can easily be imagined. The Russians said little but did much—that is to say, they fortified and garrisoned Port Arthur, and produced a naval programme at the beginning of last year which, if carried out, would entail the expenditure of twenty-four millions sterling in six years in the building of a great Pacific fleet. Of this twenty-four millions, ten millions were allocated for the construction of ships in their own dockyards, and in France, Germany and the United States. The remaining fourteen millions

sterling, which are also to be spent before the end of 1905, have not yet been allocated, but it is part of the programme officially announced at the beginning of last year, which was prepared as the necessary and natural corollary of the occupation of Port Arthur.

Throughout the whole of the discussions on the Chinese question, no exception can be taken to either the tone or the matter of the speeches of Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour. No such compliment, however, can be paid to the utterances of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Chamberlain. It was Sir Michael Hicks-Beach who first spoke openly of maintaining our position, if necessary, by war. But his indiscretion was thrown into the shade by the outburst of Mr. Chamberlain, who in a famous, or infamous, speech virtually called Russia a devil with whom it was impossible to come to any understanding or to come to any agreement. This was the famous "long-spoon" speech, which had at least one good result. It revolted even those who most sympathized with the anti-Russian feeling, and brought down upon Mr. Chamberlain reproofs which were all the worse to bear because he knew them to be so well deserved.

The popular conception of Mr. Chamberlain is erroneous in many points, and in none so much as that which paints him as a man of strong convictions and of resolute purpose. Mr. Chamberlain in reality is a creature of impulse. He is a man of strong feelings, and when he feels strongly he speaks strongly. One of his colleagues, when explaining and apologizing

for the "long spoon" speech, maintained that it really was an outburst of offended affection. Mr. Chamberlain, to do him justice, has always been a great advocate of a good understanding with Russia. At the time when Mr. Gladstone seemed to be heading full swim for war with Russia over the Penjdeh affair in 1885, Mr. Chamberlain was almost, if not quite, alone in the Cabinet in maintaining that war was neither necessary nor expedient. "We are going to war all round the world on a pin's point," he is said to have remarked to Mr. Gladstone. No one was better pleased than Mr. Chamberlain when the result proved that war was not only unnecessary but impossible, Germany and Austria having informed the Sultan that he was on no account to allow our fleet to pass the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus; and the Ameer of Afghanistan having informed Lord Dufferin at the same time that he would not on any account allow British troops to pass through Afghanistan to attack the Russians in Central Asia. When Mr. Chamberlain foreswore his allegiance to Mr. Gladstone and went over into the Tory camp, he carried with him not only his thrall, Mr. Jesse Collings, and the whole Chamberlain clan, but he also carried among his impedimenta his belief that an understanding with the Russians was both possible and desirable. In Council he had always advocated the establishment of an understanding with Russia, and hence when the negotiations about Port Arthur came to their unfortunate ending, he went off in a tangent in the opposite direction, and

in an outburst of temper declared that we would need a very long spoon if we were to sup with the Russians. It was only "pretty Fanny's way," and thoroughly in accordance with the methods and manners of the new diplomacy, of which he is the patentee and sole possessor of author's rights. I suppose Mr. Chamberlain would allege in self-defence, first, that he never adequately realized the extent to which Sir Claude MacDonald's attempt to convert Talienwan into a treaty port was inevitably regarded by the Russians as a scandalous breach of good faith on our part. The significance of the fact that Talienwan was the only ice-free port in that region through which Russia could have access to the sea may have escaped him. He further has the characteristic John Bullish belief that when you get mad the best thing to do is to swear at large. It blows off steam and relieves internal pressure to give your adversary a piece of your mind. That may be all very well for the individual citizen; but Mr. Chamberlain should never have forgotten that he was a Minister of the Crown, and in that capacity was bound to reduce the exuberance of his natural disposition within the limits of diplomatic propriety.

When matters were in this troublous state, a further difficulty arose concerning the railway from Pekin to Neuchang. The Russians, whatever faults they may have had, and whatever mistakes they may have made in the conduct of their diplomacy in the Far East, can certainly not be accused of any reticence, reserve, or dissimulation as to the objects of their policy. They

had, even before Port Arthur was taken, frankly avowed their objection to see any other European Power establish political influence in Manchuria. They had further made arrangements with the Chinese Government which precluded them from making any concessions giving political influence to any European Power within what they considered to be the sphere of their interest. The attempt made at Pekin in the interest of the concessionaires who are financed by the Shanghai Bank, to obtain a concession for a railway to Neuchang, brought our Government face to face with the Russians. No sooner was it announced that the concession was to be granted than the Russians objected, the Chinese recoiled, and there was another outburst on the part of the Russophobist Jingo party against the interference of the Russian Government with British enterprise. The Russians said little but stood firm. The concession was inconsistent with the agreement which the Chinese had previously concluded with the Russians, and it had to be cancelled. Thereupon there was great ululation in the Jingo camp, and Lord Salisbury was abused in all the moods and tenses for making another of the graceful concessions which it was declared had made British policy a by-word for weakness and imbecility. As a matter of fact, Lord Salisbury could not help himself, for the Chinese had merely promised us a concession under pressure, which was incompatible with the agreement into which they had previously entered with the Russian Government. Finally, after a good deal of angry

altercation, the Russian objection was sustained. British money was to be used in the construction of the railway, but provision was taken to prevent the employment of British capital being used as the lever for the establishment of a British *imperium in imperio* in Northern China.

While the situation was in this strained state, matters were made worse by various stories as to the concession of a railway running from Pekin southwards towards the Yang-tse-kiang valley which was financed by the Russo-Chinese Bank, and was held to be the mere stalking-horse for the extension of Russian political authority into a region which we had marked out for ourselves.

I should have mentioned before that in the struggle between Russian and British diplomacy at Pekin, England had gained an extension of territory on the mainland opposite Hong Kong, and also had secured concessions for the opening of the Yang-tse-kiang valley to foreign vessels, which, in the opinion of those best competent to judge, counterbalanced a hundred-fold all the commercial advantages the Russians were likely to gain for twenty years to come in Manchuria.

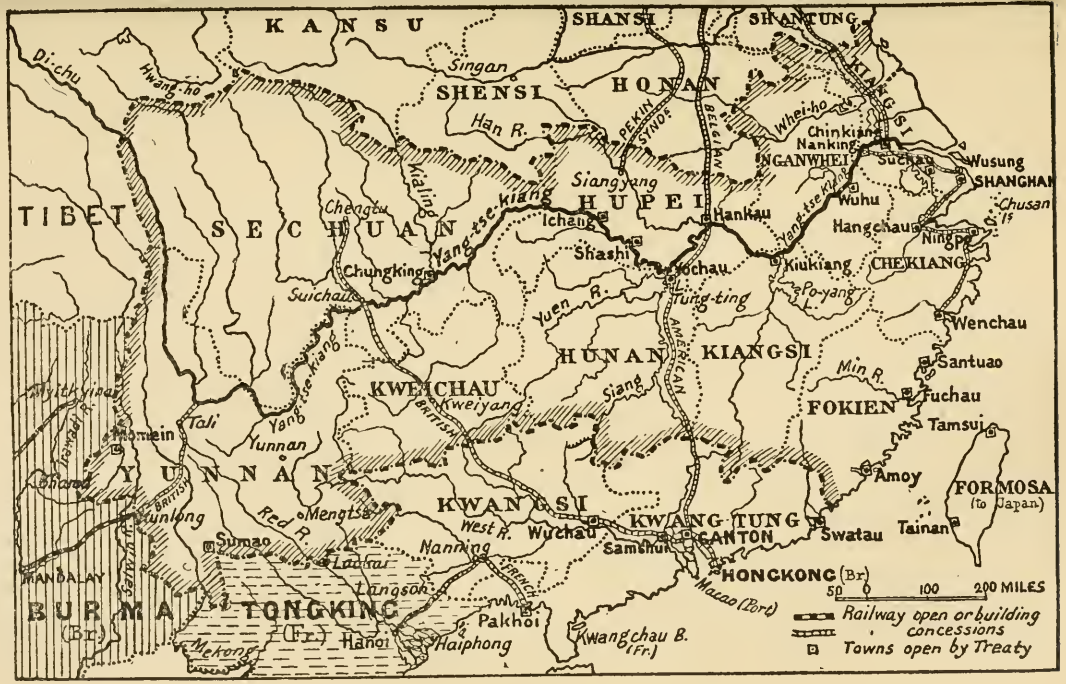
The British Government had also secured the still more important concession which went further towards creating an *imperium in imperio* in the Chinese Empire than all the other concessions put together. For a long time past the customs of the Chinese Empire have been under the control of Sir Robert Hart, who was Inspector-General of Customs. Sir Robert Hart's

appointment, however, was purely personal. His status last year was changed by the arrangement arrived at between Great Britain and China, which not only secured Sir Robert Hart's position, but established the principle that his successor must be an Englishman, as long as the trade of Great Britain in China exceeded that of any of her competitors. All these advantages, however, seemed to the excited assailants of Lord Salisbury as mere dust in the balance compared with the occupation of Port Arthur by Russia and the pruning of the concession of the Neuchang railway.

Hitherto it had been the established custom of the British Foreign Office not to lend the diplomatic support of Great Britain to concession-hunters in China or elsewhere. It was Prince Bismarck who first began the practice of using his Ambassadors as commercial travellers, and of employing the resources of Imperial diplomacy in order to deflect orders to German firms. After struggling for some time against the clamor of the Ministerial press the Government gave way, and announced that they would support against Russia the Chinese Government's grant of any concession to a British subject. Mr. Gladstone called the Anglo-Turkish Treaty of 1878 "an insane convention," but it was sanity itself compared with an undertaking which practically left it in the power of the Chinese Government to force us into a war with Russia whenever it suited the policy of the mandarins to embroil her two great European neighbors. When things reached this pass, I thought it was about time

that I recalled the suggestion made by the late Emperor, and that I should proceed to Russia for the purpose of ascertaining, if possible, what the Russian Government was really driving at, and whether there was any possibility of clearing up misunderstandings and of ascertaining the real drift of events in the Far East.

Before I started, however, matters began to mend, and negotiations—the "long spoon" notwithstanding—were begun between the Russian and the British Governments, the basis of which was the delimitation of their respective spheres of interest. The understanding suggested by the Russian Foreign Office, and favorably considered by Great Britain, was that Britain should regard the province of Manchuria as lying entirely within the Russian sphere of interest, subject to the understanding that Talienwan was to be an open port, that no preferential duties were to be charged, and that all goods were to be admitted subject only to the maximum duties laid down in the Treaty of Tientsin. By this arrangement the door of Talienwan would be opened as wide as that of any other treaty port in the world; British capital could be as fairly invested in Manchuria as in any other part of the Chinese Empire, but no concessions carrying political influence were to be sought by us in Manchuria. In return for this concession the Russians suggested that the valley of the Yang-tse-kiang should be regarded as the British sphere of interest; and that they on their part would abstain from pushing for any concessions carrying



MAP OF THE YANG-TSE-KIANG VALLEY

political influence in the Yang-tse-kiang valley. The valley of the Yellow River, which lies between Manchuria and the Yang-tse-kiang, was to be a happy hunting-ground for the concessionaires of both Empires—a kind of intermediate buffer State or sphere of interest, which would be common to both Empires. The matter did not go beyond diplomatic conversations, in which the proposals put forward by the Russians were not unfavorably considered by the British Government.

Matters were in this state when, to the immense astonishment of every one, the Tsar's Rescript appeared, like a bolt from the blue sky. It was so utterly unexpected that, when one distinguished Russian diplomatist was told by a friend what he had read in the papers, he put it down to the crass stupidity of his acquaintance, who, he thought, had probably mixed up some proposal for the disarmament of Cretan insurgents with a general proposal for an arrest of armaments. He was by no means alone in the amazement which the Emperor's sudden initiative created throughout the ranks of diplomacy, both Russian and foreign.

The publication of the Rescript gave at once a new objective to my tour. I had first merely intended to make a short trip to St. Petersburg, and to come back at once. But the Emperor by this time had gone to Livadia. It was the accident of his being in the Crimea that first suggested to me the idea of making the tour of Europe. I had never been further south

than Toula in Russia. I had never visited either the Balkan Peninsula or Austria-Hungary. I therefore decided to extend and enlarge my original design, and instead of merely going to see the Emperor, I projected the tour round Europe which I subsequently carried out. Some of the first impressions of this run through the future Continental Commonwealth are embodied in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER III

HISPANIOLIZATION

The most conspicuous event in the history of 1898 was undoubtedly the sudden apparition of the United States on the field of world politics. It had long been foreseen as inevitable, but when the moment struck, the unanimity and enthusiasm with which the whole American nation rushed its Government into war startled the onlookers, especially those who had paid little attention to the development of American Imperialism. It is tolerably safe to say that, outside Great Britain, there were very few persons who were in the least degree prepared for the outburst of 1898; and even in Great Britain there were many who were very much taken by surprise. The English, however, had one great advantage which enabled them to understand and appreciate the nature of the American movement. This was not so much community of language as the instinct of race. After all, what had happened in the United States was nothing but what had, time and again, happened in Great Britain. We had, indeed, led the way in all such enterprises for more than a generation past. No Englishman who was in the least degree informed as to the nature of Spanish mis-

government in Cuba will deny that, had the policy of the United States been directed by the statesmen of Downing Street, and had the American people been subject to the impulses which sway the British public, the Spanish flag would long ago have disappeared from the American Continent.

Another great advantage which enabled our people to understand the action of America was the close analogy which existed between the American movement for the liberation of Cuba and the great agitations which from time to time had swept over this country in favor of the liberation of Christian provinces from the Sultan. English policy has occasionally been revolutionized, and has frequently been deflected by a great humanitarian impulse beating passionately in the hearts of the common people. On the Continent of Europe such experiences are ither unknown or are extremely rare. Hence, when the United States declared war against Spain, it was only in England that the sincerity, the genuineness of the popular feeling found general recognition. Everywhere else it was believed that the humanitarian professions which figured so conspicuously in the diplomatic and public declarations of the American Government were mere pretexts put forward to mask a long meditated design upon the possessions of a neighbor. The English, who have been accustomed to similar misrepresentations on the part of Continental nations, found themselves in lively sympathy with their American kinsfolk, not merely because of what

they were doing, but because of the way in which they were misjudged by their critics.

But while this was true concerning the outbreak of the war, even the English were not a little amazed at the sudden development of American ambitions. It is true, no doubt, that the completeness and dramatic character of the American successes at Manila and at Santiago were sufficient to elate a less excitable people than the Americans. But that the American Republic, which for a century had been constantly held up before our eyes as a type of the staid, serious, business-like commonwealth, should suddenly have passed under the sway of Imperial ambitions, would not have been credited in England any more than it would have been in the United States itself before Dewey destroyed the Spanish fleet at Manila. It is, no doubt, true that the motives which led the Americans to insist upon the cession of the Philippines were largely humanitarian, and sprang in great measure from a conception of Imperial duty which was far removed from anything that could be described as Jingoism. The sentiment of the obligations which they owed to the islanders, whose government they had destroyed; the sense of supreme power, carrying with it obligations which must be fulfilled—even though they exposed the Commonwealth to misrepresentation and imposed upon the United States a burden much more onerous than profitable—undoubtedly counted for much more than censorious critics are willing to admit. At the same time it was impossible to deny that below all the

lofty motives which impelled many Americans to take up their cross and accept the responsibility of civilizing the Philippines, there was a strong turbid flood of masterful ambition. The Americans had felt their strength for the first time beyond the seas. They had made their *début* in the arena of world politics. They had gained immediate and universal recognition as a world Power—as they believed, the greatest of the world Powers. They had conquered; why should they not annex? Annexation was the fashion of the hour. All the other Powers had established outposts on the Asiatic Continent. It was not for the United States to shrink appalled from assuming a burden which much weaker states had borne with pride for generation after generation. The pride of victory, the flush of conquest, the determination to assert themselves in the world—in short, all the motives with which we are alas! only too familiar, asserted themselves imperiously across the Atlantic, and combined with much more exalted sentiments in impressing upon the Old World the sense of the sudden advent of a new competitor for empire, richer than any of those which had already engaged in the partitioning of the world, and which was likely to bring to the great international game a spirit of audacity, not to say of recklessness, far greater than their own. We are even now much too near such a great world-event adequately to realize its importance.

It was not only the advent of a new and formidable factor which must henceforth be reckoned with

in the world problem that startled and bewildered Europe. There came along with it a curious sense of the instability of things. The older nations felt very much as the inhabitants in a region which for the first time has been swayed by an earthquake. Down to the day when Dewey destroyed the Spanish fleet at Manila, nothing seemed so absolutely fixed and stable in a mutable world as the determination of the United States not to fly their flag on any territory but their own. The traditional policy of the United States, the declarations of their statesmen, the apparently unanimous conviction of the people, all combined to make the rest of the world believe that whatever might happen within the American Continent, they were quite safe in calculating that, excepting between the Pacific and the Atlantic, the United States need not be reckoned with. The day after the destruction of the fleet at Manila the whole scene changed as if by magic. The traditional policy, the declarations of statesmen, nay more, even the convictions of the people themselves, seemed to be totally transformed. The mariners who landed upon the back of the kraken, and imagined that they were on *terra firma*, were not more astonished when the huge monster suddenly dived beneath the sea, than was mankind when the United States asserted their determination to keep what the victory of Dewey had placed within their grasp.

Simultaneously with the blazing apparition of American Imperialism there was witnessed another phenomenon, which in its way was equally disquieting.

Spain, down to the beginning of this year, had been considered, not indeed as a great Power, but as a state which was capable of holding its own within the limited area of its influence. The reputation of Spanish statemen, it is true, was not very high, but it was believed that they were at any rate sane—that at Madrid there were Ministers who realized their responsibility, and who would bring to the government of the country the same forethought and care that is displayed by ordinary men in the ordinary affairs of life. The Spanish fleet, for instance, was believed to be no inadequate opponent of the fleet of the United States. They had behind them a great tradition. The quality of the vessels was first class. Their armament was thought to be even superior to that of the American ships. In land forces they were overwhelmingly superior in number and equipment, in discipline and in experience. The army in Cuba had been acclimatized by long campaigns waged against the insurgents. The almost universal calculation was that Spain at least could hold her own for a time, while in Cuba itself she would make a long and arduous resistance. 1898, however, showed that Spain had gone rotten at the head. They had the ships, but their armament was lacking. They had the sailors, but they were untrained in gunnery, and lacked the necessary experience in naval warfare. The advantages of material were useless, and when they were put to the test they went down like a row of ninepins before their assailants.

Far more serious, however, than the failure of the fleet was the evidence which the war afforded of the lack of any serious thought or any practical common sense on the part of the so-called statesmen of Madrid. Imbecility is hardly too strong a term to use to describe the way in which the Spanish Government encountered the reverses which rained upon them in two Continents. It was then discovered that Spain had not only ceased to be a Power among the nations, but that she was no longer capable of producing administrators who possessed either the nerve, the conscience, or the *morale* necessary for the maintenance of the national credit or the defence of the national interests. There then came into use a word of which we are likely to hear a good deal more in the years that are to come. That term was "*hispaniolization*." A decaying state, when it reaches a certain point of what may be called national putrefaction, is said to "hispaniolized." It marks an advanced stage in national decay.

Hispaniolization, indeed, is no new phenomenon, but we have never seen it exhibited on so great a scale in a nation which at one time had played the foremost rôle in the drama of history. In the previous year there had been afforded another example in a young state of the same lack of serious purpose, the same absence of common sense, the same reckless indifference to the most simple and elementary facts of government, which were subsequently displayed in Madrid. The levity, the absurdity, the fantastic disregard of the plainest duties which characterized the

policy of Greece when she challenged war with Turkey, afforded only too close a parallel to the conduct of Spain. In both countries were constitutional monarchies. In both the concession of representative government had resulted in producing nothing more worthy of respect than a scramble of office-seekers for the spoils, and neither country in the hour of its misfortune showed any capacity to produce a strong and capable administrator. Hence ensued, when the moment of trial came, a paralysis which brought both states to the verge of ruin. Greece was saved by the intervention of the Powers, which threw their shield over the prostrate kingdom. Spain found no friends in need, and had to consent reluctantly to the sacrifice of almost all its possessions over sea. Financial disaster accompanied military defeat, and nations everywhere realized more vividly than ever before that states, like individuals, could go reeling down to the grave with exhausted vitality and a paralyzed brain.

At the same time that this tremendous world-drama was being enacted in the presence of the whole world, two of the greatest statesmen who had long towered aloft as pillars in the international Commonwealth were removed by death. Mr. Gladstone was the first to go; but he had hardly been laid to rest in the Abbey before Germany had to lament the disappearance of the great statesman whose iron hand had rebuilt the fabric of German unity in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The nations which had been governed for nearly the lifetime of a generation by old,

experienced statesmen, found themselves in the hands of comparative tyros. The throne of Russia was occupied by an almost unknown young man. The destinies of Germany were in the hands of a monarch whose restless energy and feverish ambition offered the sharpest possible contrast to the traditional idea of the stolid, phlegmatic and matter-of-fact nation over which he ruled. In Austria-Hungary, the rivalry of the various nationalities which make up that composite empire-kingdom seemed to have escaped the control of the Government. Between Austria-Hungary and chaos there existed but the barrier of a single life; nor was there either in Hungary or in Austria a single statesman of European reputation. France was torn by internal dissensions, the end of which no one could foresee. For a moment M. Hanotaux had seemed to display some capacity to give permanence and consistency to French foreign policy; but M. Hanotaux disappeared, and a succession of ephemeral Ministries once more showed that while the Third Republic possessed an infinite capacity for producing politicians eager for portfolios, she showed no sign of any ability to produce a directing class or a statesman with genius for government.

In England the situation, although apparently more stable, had many elements of anxiety, not to say of danger. Foremost among these must be placed the disappearance of the balance of the Constitution. Hitherto the government of the British Empire had always been conducted on the assumption that the

party in power was confronted by an Opposition which could be relied upon to act as a check upon the Government, and which was prepared at any moment to take office and form an administration composed of trained statesmen with a well-defined political programme. But of late years that security has disappeared. Lord Salisbury was in power at the head of a large majority almost entirely free from the restraint and the control which previous administrations had found in the existence of an Opposition. Whenever a Liberal Government is in power it has always to reckon with the House of Lords, which is a permanently Conservative body. Lord Salisbury was equally supreme both in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons. Confronting him in the House of Commons there was only a disorganized and distracted remnant of a great historical party, which had neither a leader to follow nor a policy to recommend. As a natural and inevitable result, Ministers, freed from the usual restraints of Governments and finding themselves confronted by no organized Opposition, gave free scope to their individual idiosyncrasies. Under the semblance of a homogeneous Cabinet we were confronted with the spectacle of a Prime Minister whose pacific tendency was more or less openly countered by the current of bellicose sentiment which found its leader in Mr. Chamberlain. In the House of Commons party discipline preserved the outward semblance of unity; but in the press, especially in the newspapers which were nominally Ministerialist, this hostile tendency found

vent in a series of unsparing criticisms which left little or nothing to be said by the recognized chiefs of the Liberal Opposition.

The situation, indeed, was one which in some respects bore an ominous resemblance to that which existed when the Aberdeen Cabinet controlled the destinies of England in the middle of the century. Lord Aberdeen, although differing in many respects from Lord Salisbury, nevertheless resembled him in a strong predisposition against war and against policies which were likely to necessitate the adoption of a course of warlike adventure. Mr. Chamberlain was the Lord Palmerston of the situation. Both had the same dominant characteristics—a swaggering determination to assert themselves without much regard to the susceptibilities of their neighbors, and an uncompromising readiness to adopt the last arguments of kings when other arguments failed. If we were to carry the parallel further we might find considerable analogy between the position of Mr. Balfour in 1898 and that of Mr. Gladstone in 1854. Mr. Kinglake, in a well-known passage, has explained how it was that a Cabinet, whose Prime Minister was devoted to peace, and whose chief pillar of strength in the House of Commons was equally free from all imputation of Chauvinism, nevertheless drifted fatally into war. More than once in the course of the past year it seemed as if the parallel would hold true, even to the last bloody ultimate. Fortunately, so far, we have been spared, but no one who looks back over the history of

the twelve months, and sees the alternate phases of bluster and "bunkum," of graceful concessions and prudent retreat which followed each other with almost the regularity of the black and white squares on a checker-board, can feel particularly proud of the experiment of governing without an Opposition. On the Opposition benches there was an utter and woful lack of either initiative or resolution.

At the beginning of the year a great opportunity was offered to the Liberals of adopting a line which, as the result proved, would have commended itself to the country, and would have obviated most of the misfortunes which subsequently ensued. If they had definitely followed the plan laid down by Lord Rosebery when he abandoned the leadership and insisted that the time had come to call "Halt!" in the extension of the responsibilities, territorial and otherwise, of Great Britain; and if they had steadily and resolutely supported Lord Salisbury in his efforts to maintain a rational and pacific policy in the Far East; much that is most to be regretted in the history of the year would not have been written. But the instinct of the Opposition to oppose, even when it has neither an alternative policy nor an alternative Cabinet to place before the country, was too strong for the adoption of a policy which would at once have been patriotic and prudent. The pacific section of the Ministry found themselves overwhelmed by the pitiless hail of snarling criticisms showered upon them by their own organs morning, noon and night. The young men of the party, wax-

ing bold, and feeling that they could indulge with impunity in the license of irresponsible criticism, took a delight in assailing their own side for want of energy in defending British interests, which, being interpreted, meant going to war with Russia.

It is hardly possible to conceive of a more fatuous course than that which was taken by Sir William Harcourt, who, while professedly desiring to maintain peace, used the whole of his great forces of raillery and sarcasm in ridiculing the Government and in holding them up to derision for their lack of vigor and the inconsistency of their policy. One of his speeches which dwells in the memory was one long invective, every sentence of which tended directly in favor of the party that was endeavoring to hound the Government into war; and then by way of salve to his conscience he wound up by expressing a great desire for a good understanding and friendly relations with Russia.

A member of the Cabinet said to me on the eve of the Southport election, "We shall lose Southport and we shall lose all the by-elections because we won't go to war with Russia." I replied, "Not at all. You would lose your by-elections much worse if you did go to war with Russia. The fact is, you can govern this country either on a peace tack or on a Jingo tack; but you can't govern this country and win your by-elections if you are Jingo one day and all for peace the next." As Mr. Spender frequently remarked in the *Westminster Gazette*, it is absolutely impossible to

steer the British lion when two men are on his back, one sticking his spurs rowel-deep into his flanks, while the next moment his colleague is reining him in with curb and bit.

During the whole of that trying time, when the issues of peace and war were hanging in the balance, and it seemed as if the peace section in the Cabinet would be overborne by the clamors of their own supporters, Lord Rosebery, who had flung up the Liberal leadership rather than assent to what he regarded as a dangerous drift towards war for the redress of the wrongs of the Armenians, said never a word, but preserved a silence of the Sphinx on the rare occasions on which he was visible to his countrymen. At last, when things came to a head and the Government, after fumbling and floundering, felt that it must placate its supporters by seizing something somewhere, and Wei-Hai-Wei was occupied, the nation waited with anxiety for some words of wisdom from the men of light and leading who were responsible for the direction of the affairs of the Opposition. But Lord Rosebery was as dumb as a sheeted corpse, while the Liberal leaders in the House of Commons decided with only one dissentient that it would be impolitic for them to adopt the policy of a resolute opposition to such an extension of our imperial responsibilities. So the party which had been self-decapitated in order to prevent action in the interest of humanity in the near East, contented itself with the emission of barren and futile criticisms upon the seizure of a great stronghold in the China

seas. The clamor of concessionnaires, the angry denunciations of men whose business had not prospered as much as they hoped it might have done in the China trade, found no strong and resolute voice upraised to rebuke the heedless selfishness of financial greed. All this, it must be confessed, has an ominous resemblance to the beginnings of hispaniolization in our own Empire.

Amid all this paralysis of self-effacement by a demoralized and disheartened Opposition, and the conflicting counsels and eddying policies of a Cabinet, in which it seemed as if Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Salisbury were striving for mastery as Jacob and Esau struggled together before birth, it was impossible not to be impressed by a phenomenon which boded ill for the peace of nations. That phenomenon was the growth of the influence of the daily press. It may sound paradoxical, but it is nevertheless true that side by side with this alarming development of the power of irresponsible journalism there has been as perceptible a diminution of the influence of the Press as an arena for the grave discussion of public questions. The paradox is easily explicable when we reflect upon the dual nature of a newspaper. The editor of a newspaper is the showman of the universe. It is given to him to display before the eyes of mankind the vast moving panorama which is continually in progress among mankind. You put your penny or your halfpenny into the slot, and you are permitted to survey mankind from China to Peru. The keeper of this

journalistic slot-machine, as a condition of his existence, must make his living photographs move as vividly, picturesquely and dramatically as possible before the eyes of the public whom he wishes to attract, otherwise they will go to somebody else's slot-machine, and he will be left penniless. Side by side with this function of showman, the editor combines the task of a mentor, discussing, praising, condemning and judging the actions of the characters which he displays in vivid life upon his broadsheet. But men are but grown-up children at the best; and no one who has had any experience of the nursery can have forgotten the impatience with which youngsters resent the morals that all serious-minded writers used to consider necessary to round off their tales. So inveterate is the habit of skipping the moral that I well remember, when I brought out an edition of Æsop's Fables in my "Books for the Bairns," I reversed the usual custom, and condensed the moral into a headline as the only chance of its finding acceptance with the juvenile public. Editors are driven to act very much in the same manner. The showman gains more and more upon the moralist, and the influence of the editor is more felt in the headlines of his paper than in his leading articles. The "scare-heads," to give them the expressive name which they enjoy in the United States, have gained; the leading articles have lost. Hence the influence of the journalist which has developed of late is not the influence of the writer of leading articles, who at least is bound to state arguments

in a more or less rational and consecutive fashion; but it is the influence of journalism of the scare-head variety, which employs all the resources of type for the purpose of emphasizing and deepening the sensation of the news of the day.

It is easy to see how this change has come about. Twenty or thirty years ago the majority of our people did not read the daily newspapers, and those who did were more or less educated. Since the Education Act began to turn out millions of youths with sufficient education to read the newspapers, a new public was created unaccustomed to the serious discussion of political affairs, but quite willing to be interested in the endless sensations with which the progress of events is constantly supplying the reader of newspapers. They were willing to read the daily papers, but only on condition that the news was short and spicy, and served up in tit-bits with all the garnishing that effective subediting could give it.

We see the ultimate outcome of this tendency in the *Daily Mail*, a journal established within the last two years by a man with a natural genius for journalism, with limitless resources and restless energy. The *Daily Mail*, a halfpenny morning paper, although the youngest of the London dailies, has far eclipsed all its older rivals in circulation. But its leading articles are but snippets, and its political comments are often little more than snap-shots. It owes its success to the ability, energy, and resources with which its editor has succeeded in making it the mirror in which you

can see in miniature the reflection of everything that is going on in the world that is piquant, interesting, or sensational. It is a many-colored quilt of piquant paragraphs, all duly displayed with adequate scare-heads, and the whole served up with a snippety-snap smartness and up-to-dateness which abundantly accounts for its phenomenal success. A journal that has already achieved a circulation of half a million a day is a fact whose significance cannot be ignored as an index to the state of public feeling or as an influence in the direction of public affairs. The *Daily Mail*, in short, is a first-class half-penny show, which has counted for a good deal in the development of the impatient unrest of the London public to which Ministers are always more or less responsive.

I give this prominence to the *Daily Mail* for another reason—because it so vividly illustrates the ascendency which the scare-head editor has over the responsible director of the responsible political opinions of the paper. There are few men in London who are so level-headed and so sane on the subject of China and our relations with Russia as the editor of the *Daily Mail*. Mr. Alfred Harmsworth is of the school of Cecil Rhodes; and Cecil Rhodes has never even had the mildest attack of Russophobia. No school in the Empire has looked more dispassionately and judicially upon the progress of Russia than the Rhodesians, and in this Mr. Harmsworth is a faithful disciple of his master. Although these may be the convictions of

the editor, it unfortunately cannot be said that the *Daily Mail's* influence during the whole of the agitated period was in favor of rationality or of the pursuance of a reasonable and sympathetic course in the region where the interests of Russia and England were supposed to be at stake. It is more piquant, more interesting, and tends more to keep up the sensation and interest of the show to issue day by day a paper bristling with suggestions that the Russians were overreaching us and that Lord Salisbury was being bested; and so things went on until we had the *Mail* almost threatening the Government with disaster if it did not seize Wei-Hai-Wei or some other vantage point in China.

Another example may be cited of latter-day journalism which in one respect is more apposite, but in another does not illustrate quite so clearly the conflicting influence of the editor and the writer of scare-heads. The *New York Journal*, which a few years ago came into the possession of Mr. W. R. Hearst, became last year in many ways the most notable specimen of the journalism which is now in the ascendant. If you wish to know the difference between America of thirty years ago and America of to-day, you only need to compare the *New York Tribune* with the *New York Journal*, and contrast Horace Greeley with W. R. Hearst. The *New York Journal* is the supreme example of successful journalism achieved by what may be described as the persistent adoption of a policy of spasmodic sensation. Mr. Hearst is a man com-

paratively young, a millionaire with great journalistic *flaire*, and without any well-defined political principles, who nevertheless was possessed by a vast ambition. At first the ambition seems to have taken no other definite shape or form than a determination to beat the *New York World* on its own ground. To this end he poured out money like water, and by a series of Napoleonic *coups* at last established himself in the premier position of American journalist. During the war, when he had a fresh edition nearly every ten minutes, and filled up the intervals by painting the latest bulletins on enormous boardings in front of the office, the circulation is said to have reached 1,250,000 per day, a circulation without previous parallel in the history of American journalism.

A distinguished statesman speaking of the *New York Journal* and its rival the *New York World*, expressed with great vehemence his conviction that the "yellow journalism," as it is called, of New York was "the most potent engine ever devised by the devil for the demoralization of the democracy." Strong as this declaration may appear, it is feeble compared with the denunciations which are rained upon the *Journal* by the Americans of the soberer and saner variety, whom you find in diplomatic posts abroad or meet in society. So vehement and violent are the diatribes levelled against Mr. Hearst and the *Journal* that I have occasionally found myself in danger of incurring the major excommunication because I have occasionally acceded to his request to contribute spe-

cial articles to his columns. In reality, the *Journal* is by no means the leprous rag which its enemies represent it. It is a newspaper which appeals to the crowd. Not even the greatest of journalistic Barnums could attract a million readers to his show without largely pandering, if we may use so strong a word, to the groundlings. It would be high treason in America to use the phrase once familiar in English politics and to describe the newspaper public as a "swinish multitude;" but there is a greater element of truth in the phrase than sticklers for the dignity of human nature would always be disposed to admit. The public is not so much swinish, as it is preoccupied with its own affairs, and if its attention is to be attracted it needs to be stimulated, to be shocked as by a perpetual succession of electric thrills. All newspapers recognize this more or less, but Mr. Hearst last year was the supreme practitioner of the art. To get up a sensation, to keep it going, and before it has time to be played out to get up another sensation, and yet another, in endless succession—with that whole art and mystery of latter-day journalism he was familiar to his finger-tips. But it would be a great mistake to regard these showman arts by which the crowd is attracted to the fair as representing the whole or even the greater part of the phenomenal position which Mr. Hearst attained. For some time the *Journal* swung to and fro, apparently without either chart, compass, or steering directions; but within the last year it aspired to be much more than the mere sounding-board of the "cackle of the

bourg," or the journalistic cinematograph of the events of the world's history.

More than any other man in the United States, Mr. Hearst was responsible for the war with Spain. As he constantly avowed in his leading columns, while other newspapers were content to try to chronicle history, it was the boast of the *Journal* to make it; and he made it with a vengeance. Whatever we may think as to the wisdom or unwisdom of the course which the *Journal* has advocated, no one can deny that from first to last it preached what may be called the expansionist doctrine with a vehemence, an energy, an ability, and a persistency which could not be excelled. Responsible American statesmen will tell you that they never read the *Journal*, that it is a paper that is never seen in any respectable house, and that it is a great mistake to pay any attention to what they call its "ravings."

But to all this I have only to make the same reply that Prince Bismarck made to a British Ambassador, to whom he had complained about some articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. "The *Pall Mall Gazette*," said the Ambassador impatiently, "is in no sense a Ministerial organ." "No," said Bismarck, "perhaps not; but whatever the *Pall Mall Gazette* says to-day, Ministers do to-morrow." And it may safely be said that if any one wished to form a correct estimate of the probable drift of American policy during the whole of last year, he would have found a much safer guide in the leading columns of the *Journal* than in the avowed

intentions and genuine convictions of President McKinley and his Cabinet.

Nor is it only in the English-speaking countries that we find the influence of the latter-day journalist exerting more and more a dominant influence in the direction of the affairs of nations. There is only one other paper in the world which can challenge primacy, in point of view of circulation, with the *New York Journal*. That is the *Petit Journal* of France. The *Petit Journal* is a creation largely of the publishing genius of Marinoni. It counts its daily circulation by the million, and there is no nook or corner of France into which it does not penetrate. It has many good qualities, and, like both the *Daily Mail* and the *New York Journal*, it is conspicuously free from any appeal to the great goddess Lubricity, whose modern Paphos is Paris. But of all engines for exciting and intensifying national hatred and envenoming the feelings of class against class, it would be difficult to find anything worse than the *Petit Journal*. No accusation against England is too absurd not to be welcomed in its columns, and no invective against the friends of Dreyfus can be too savage for the editorial taste. It goes forth day by day with its million voices into all the villages and hamlets of France, engendering hatred and stirring up strife.

This perhaps is a natural and an inevitable result of the extension of the journalistic suffrage to great masses of the people to whom you can only appeal if you print in very large capitals, and whose attention

you can only command by a perpetual prodding with a very sharp pen. The old readers, the minority, may still read their papers, but they are no longer in the exclusive possession of the field. Their judgment is overborne; their voice is silenced by the murmur which rises from the great crowd at the show, which when it is tickled laughs, and when it is provoked roars from a million throats. This, it may be said, is only democracy, but it is democracy articulate. It is a partial return under modern conditions to the ancient practice in which the affairs of a state were decided by the whole people assembled together in a mass meeting. The modern nation is little better than a huge mass meeting, in which the voice of the scare-head editor alone has stridency sufficient to carry to the verge of the crowd. His voice is never still. It sounds from a vantage like that of the muezzin's tower, high above the city'sdin, when it cries; but not like the simple Mahometan, "To prayers, to prayers! There is no God but God, and Mahomet is the prophet of God,"—rather it cries aloud to the barbaric instinct of self-aggrandisement, self-assertion, self-glorification. "There is no people so great as the American people," cries the *Journal* from its million issues, "no people so great, so glorious, so good, so altogether fashioned in the image of God." And so in similar fashion our latter-day journalists instead of acting as mentors, accept the rôle of flatterers, and diligently fan the flames of national egotism and imperial ambition. It is, perhaps, too much to expect a journalist

who depends for his existence upon the crowds which he can attract through his halfpenny peep-show, to don the mantle of a prophet and to risk stoning in the market-place for speaking stern but unpalatable truths in the ears of his countrymen; but the fact that the temptation to flatter the prejudices and minister to the passions of the crowd is almost irresistible increases rather than diminishes the danger of the position.

This phenomenon is one of the most conspicuous and universally recognized perils which threaten the maintenance of peace. It is no longer in the cabinets of monarchs or in the closets of despots that we must seek for the greatest peril which threatens the tranquillity of the world. The despot, especially if he be hereditary, is saddled with an ever-present sense of responsibility. He is trained for his task from his childhood, and he is chained to his throne by obligations from which he cannot divest himself. But the irresponsible editor, who flings firebrands all day long amid the combustibles of national passion, lives only for the day, and has no restraint either of law or of custom placed upon his reckless incentives to war.

I did not meet a single responsible man in the course of my tour through Europe, whether he might be journalist or statesman, diplomatist or sovereign, who did not frankly admit that the unbridled license of the press, and the interest which it had in promoting situations that create sensation, constituted the most alarming and serious danger against which it behoved

statesmen to provide some barrier if the peace were to be maintained.

A well-known journalist in Paris to whom I had made some such observation as this, exclaimed: "Nothing could be more true. There are men in Paris at this moment who, in order to sell ten more copies of their paper to-night, would not hesitate to make the whole planet swim with human blood."

It is easier to point to the evil than to indicate the remedy, but one or two observations are forcing themselves with increasing pressure upon the attention of responsible men. The liberty of the press is one of the most cherished palladia of human freedom. England is the home of such liberty, but in England the law is prompt to punish any attempt on the part of the press to express an opinion upon any question when once it has come before the attention of the courts. Is it too much to hope that when the United States of Europe comes more visibly into shape as a state organism, a similar restraint may be laid upon newspapers in the discussion of international questions when they are lodged for settlement before an international tribunal?

In this connection I may be pardoned for recalling an incident in my own experience. Some years ago, Jabez Balfour, the founder of the Liberator Building Society, failed, and involved in his downfall the ruin of thousands of the most deserving and most unfortunate of British investors. Instead of waiting to answer before the tribunals of his country for the

gigantic system of embezzlement and fraud by which he had plundered the widow and orphan in a thousand homes, he bolted from the country and took refuge in the Argentine Republic. Much diplomatic representation was necessary and no small expense was incurred before his extradition was agreed to, and he was handed over to the officers of the law, who brought him back to answer for his crimes in the dock at Newgate. In chronicling the fact of his being brought back to justice in my monthly review of events, under the heading of "The Progress of the World," I remarked that the said Balfour was a rare rogue, and added that we should soon hear no more of him. That he was a rare rogue no one could deny. That we did hear no more of him was a prophecy literally fulfilled, because within a very few weeks he was consigned to a felon's cell, where he still remains in durance vile. Nevertheless for making that perfectly obvious remark concerning a man who had set our laws at defiance and was being brought back by the strong hand of the law to undergo his trial on a criminal charge, I was haled up before Her Majesty's Judges, severely reproved and fined £100 and costs in order to teach me the limits of the liberties of the press in commenting upon affairs which are still *sub judice*.

Against the justice of that verdict, and the soundness of the principle upon which the law was enforced, not one protest was raised in the press, nor do I make any complaint on my own account. It was no doubt a personal hardship, but the principle was worth main-

taining at the cost of such individual inconvenience. But if, instead of hazarding a passing observation as to a criminal not yet tried, who had virtually admitted his guilt by fleeing from the jurisdiction of the Courts, I had strained every resource of passion and of rhetoric in order to inflame public opinion on a question involving peace or war which was being handled by the Foreign Offices of two countries—if I had succeeded in rousing popular passion to such an extent that it was impossible for the still, small voice of reason to be heard, and if, as a result, I had succeeded in hounding my country into a terrible war, I should no doubt have been held answerable before the judgment-seat of the Almighty, but there exists no human power and no judicial authority on this planet that would have called me to account.

The contrast between the excessive severity with which the law guards the impartiality and the serenity of the judicial bench in cases involving the liberty and property of private citizens, and the indifference which is displayed to passionate invectives avowedly directed against the dispassionate consideration of international disputes, can only be regarded as a recklessness too great to have been incurred deliberately by any sane people, and which, therefore, will sooner or later have to be corrected when the attention of mankind has been turned to this omission in the panoply of civilization.

PART III

THE NORTHWESTERN STATES

CHAPTER I

BELGIUM

Before even I had landed on the Continent a catastrophe that overwhelmed Cervera's fleet on the Cuban coast was vividly recalled to the mind by the associations of the narrow seas through which the Ostend steamer ploughed its way. The very wind was still, the unquiet seas were smooth, and overhead the silent stars looked down from a cloudless sky. But along that low-lying coast, where glimmered here and there the sentinel lights, there swept three hundred years ago, in bloody confusion and smoking ruin, the wreck of the Armada of Spain.

I had not been twelve hours in Brussels before I found myself in the Chapel Royal, attending the requiem mass for the hapless Empress of Austria. All the Diplomatic Corps attended in full dress, Protestant and Catholic, Christian and Moslem alike testifying in formal courtly fashion, as the solemn music wailed through the crowded church, the common sorrow of

the world for the Imperial victim. But even there the memory of the war obtruded. For among the throng of gorgeous uniforms two figures stood conspicuous by the sombre plainness of their attire.

The American Minister, of course, wore his usual plain clothes. But matching him, to the no small astonishment of the Diplomatic Corps, stood the Spanish Minister in undress. Why, no one knew. Spain, we knew, had lost her colonies and her fleets, but she surely had a uniform left.

Leaving the church, I strolled down to the most famous monument in the city, the famous square, sacred to the memory of Counts Egmont and Horn, the patriot victims of the Duke of Alva, the Weyler of his day. Everywhere in the Low Countries you stumble upon traces of the sanguinary flood-tide of Spanish conquest, of the heroic sacrifices by which these lands were redeemed for civilization and humanity in the days bygone. Nowhere could I more fittingly begin my mission of inquiry as to what the Old World thought of the New America, than in the thriving, industrious commonwealth which rose from the ashes of the Alva's vengeance.

Belgium is not one of the Great Powers, but the little kingdom is a microcosm of Europe. Her international position, her close proximity to and intimate relation with France and Germany, her traditional intimacy with England, the recent and astonishing development of her industrial enterprise in Russia, make her a vantage point from which the European

movement of opinion can be studied more conveniently and advantageously than almost any other land. But from the point of view of my American mission to ascertain what the Old World thinks of the latest new departure of the New World—that world which, ever since it was discovered by Columbus, has been an increasing source of astonishment to Europe—there was still another reason for making Belgium the starting point of a European tour of interrogation. The parallel between Belgium and the United States is curiously close. Both countries owe their political existence to a successful revolution. Although one is monarchical and the other Republican, both are alike blessed with a constitution which has its imperishable bases on the principles of the sovereignty of the people, the liberty of the press, and the liberty and equality of all religions. Both countries at their foundations abjured all ambition of foreign conquest. Each professed a resolute determination to cultivate its own garden without meddling with the lands beyond its borders. Both are industrious, prosperous, peaceful and contented, the envy of their neighbors and an example for the world. If the United States had no army, Belgium had no fleet.

Nevertheless Belgium, or rather the ruler of Belgium, succumbed even sooner than the United States to the fascination of over-sea dominion. While Americans are still hesitating whether or not to make two bites of the Philippine cherry, Belgium has, within the last dozen years, built up for herself a

tropical Empire in Africa almost eighty times her own area. She is dreaming of concessions in China, she is making immense investments in Russia. Everywhere she is looking over the pale of her own little garden for fresh fields for the investment of her superabundant capital and for the exercise of her exuberant energy. Belgium's experience, therefore, enables Belgians to form a sympathetic and intelligent judgment concerning the new departure in America.

I spent some days in Brussels, during which I had an opportunity of forming a tolerably comprehensive conception of Belgian opinion on the subject. There is no feeling of alarm or antipathy in Belgium to America's expansion, either in the West Indies or in the Philippines. They criticise it impartially, feeling that it does not concern them. But they protest against any parallel being drawn between the founding of the Empire of the Congo and the acquisition of the Philippines. Belgium, the King protests emphatically, is so small, so crowded a country—it has a population of 6,000,000 on the area of 11,300 square miles—that if he did not look out for fresh fields and pastures new his flock would ere long be compelled to eat each other.

The King of the Belgians, who, if he had but a wider scope for the exercise of his abilities, might have achieved a foremost position in the history of our times, is the founder of the Congo State. His point of view is that it is the very smallness of the Belgian kingdom which justifies the policy of expansion. As

he wrote in 1890, when he made the will leaving the Congo to the Belgian Government—a gift not even yet accepted—

I have never ceased calling the attention of my fellow countrymen to the necessity of loking torwards the countries over the sea. History teaches us that it is the moral and material interest of countries with a restricted territory to extend beyond their narrow frontiers. Greece founded on the Mediterranean opulent cities, the home of arts and civilization: Venice later on established her grandeur by the development of her maritime and commercial relations, no less than by her political success. The Netherlands possess in the Indies thirty million subjects who exchange their tropical products for those of the Mother Country. It is in serving the cause of humanity and progress that peoples of the second rank appear as useful members of the great family of nations. More than any other should an industrial and commercial nation like ours strive to secure outlets for the products of all its workers—of those who work with their brain, with their capital, or with their hands. These patriotic preoccupations have dominated my life. It is they which led to the creation of the African enterprise. My labor has not proved sterile. A young and vast State, directed from Brussels, has pasifically taken its place in the world.

"For Belgium," said a former Prime Minister, "expansion is an economic necessity. The fact that we have no fleet is sufficient to prove that it is not prompted by Imperial ambition. But with the United States it is different. Their immense resources in their own territory are barely scratched. If they found colonies as the result of conquest it is due to the lust of power. I do not blame the Government.

They were powerless before the clamor of the crowd. None the less it seems to me an enormous mistake."

It is quite true that the Belgians, as a nation or as a state, have never committed themselves to a policy of over-sea expansion. They are a cautious people. The Congo adventure is a speculation of the King's. The proposal to transfer the Congo State to Belgium has been vehemently and hitherto successfully resisted. For the last eight years the Belgian Parliament has devoted 400,000 dols. a year to subsidize the Congo administration, and it will continue to do so until 1900, when the question of annexation will once more come up. It is almost certain that the decision will be again postponed.

One cause for this reluctance to regard the Congo kingdom as part of the national estate is well worthy of American attention.

"If the Americans," said an experienced observer, "wish to make a success of the Philippines, as the Belgians have made of the Congo, the first thing they have got to do is to discover a Leopold. They need not call him a king. Of course that is impossible and unnecessary. But unless they have a capable administrator with a permanent tenure of office and a free hand they had better leave it alone. In the Congo State, the King of the Belgians is a greater autocrat than the Tsar in Russia. He invented it, he financed it, he governs it. In every detail his will is supreme. He tells us just so much about its finances as he chooses. And, being a man of extraordinary ability,

with a quite exceptional genius for finance, he has achieved a remarkable success. But there is hardly a man who knows anything about the Congo and its affairs who will not tell you that the attempt to govern that vast empire by the ever-shifting agency of party government, based on universal suffrage, would be foredoomed to failure."

But the scruples of the Belgians are disappearing in the presence of the boom in Congo stocks. The ten millions sterling which are now invested in the Congo railway and Congo commercial companies stands to-day, according to the Stock Exchange quotations, at no less a sum than thirty millions. The revenues of the State, including the Belgian and royal subsidies of £120,000, almost equal the expenditure, which last year was a trifle under £600,000. The Congo, therefore, promises to turn out a paying concern, and if the promises are made good, the objections of the Belgians to become a colonial power will probably wane and disappear.

Another point on which opinion was practically unanimous was that it is the merest midsummer madness to touch the Philippines at all unless the Americans take the whole archipelago. To take away Luzon, the very hub of the wheel, and then leave the rest of the spokes to Spain on the condition that she shall govern them more or less on American principles, was regarded as such unspeakable nonsense that it can only be criticized by an expressive shrug of the shoulders.

Belgians are by no means indifferent to American expansion in two directions. They are keenly interested in the question of the future government of the Philippines from the point of view of the Catholic Church. For Belgium for the last fourteen years has been governed by a succession of Catholic Ministries. The Liberals who attempted to establish secular education have been practically effaced. The Clericals are in power, confronted by a Socialist opposition; but the latter have no prospect of gaining office.

I made it my duty to ascertain at first hand the views of the two men who, more than any others, represent the feelings of the Catholics. Both were watching with the keenest interest the development of the situation in the Far East. Both agreed in expressing an earnest hope that, whatever is done, no confiscating hand will be laid upon the property of the religious orders. One of them, the man who for years has been, while out of office, almost as potent as Mr. Croker is in New York, would not commit himself so far as to say that he disapproved of introducing religious liberty into the Philippines, but he evidently leant that way. "The question," he said, "is whether America intends to govern these new conquests in accordance with the wishes of the population, or whether she intends to exploit them for her ideas. It is not reasonable to say that, because Belgium grants perfect religious liberty to the heathen and missionaries of the Congo, therefore she must approve of its introduction into the Philippines. There the unity of the faith exists. If

you break it down large masses will, as we see it everywhere, forsake the Catholic Church without joining any other. The result is immorality, which is deplorable."

The other, an experienced statesman, once a Prime Minister and now the President of the Chamber of Representatives, was much more liberal in his views. I was fortunate in meeting him immediately after his return from the Vatican, where he had been summoned for lengthy conversations with the Pope and the Cardinal Secretary of State, Rampolla.

He expressed without hesitation his absolute conviction that religious liberty, as in Belgium and in the United States, was the best thing for the Philippines, and that he, for his part, would as a Catholic rejoice to see abolished the whole fabric of intolerance and sectarian monopoly.

As he had enjoyed the privilege of long conversations with the Pope and his advisers, I asked him point blank whether he thought the Holy See shared his liberal views.

"You cannot expect the Pope," he said, "to make any declaration in that sense. He could not do so without repudiating doctrines affirmed by his predecessors. But he is a statesman; he is a practical man, and Rome is swarming with American clerics who have considerable influence at the Vatican. You must always distinguish between what the Pope may think with the front of his head and the *arrière pensée*, the back of it. Of course, as a matter of principle,

no Pope can declare in favor of any refusal to enforce religious uniformity. But if you ask me what I really believe, I must tell you that if the Americans establish religious liberty in the Philippines the Pope will find his compensations in the increased liberty which he will enjoy in dealing with the clergy without the intermeddling of the civil power. Religious liberty, as in Belgium, would not in the long run be detrimental to Catholic interests."

These questions are, however, more or less academical, or at least they concern the few who, in the privacy of the closet of the confessional, meditate upon the affairs of this world from their ideal of the kingdom of Heaven.

Far different was the keen interest excited by the pressure of American competition in the markets of the world. Opinions differ widely, but the best informed are the most alarmed. American competition in food-stuffs has long since established itself as the most formidable factor with which the European agriculturist has to deal. They are now beginning to wake up to the fact that American competition is likely to be not less formidable in manufactured goods. American watches have long ago driven Swiss watches out of Belgium; but as a good Belgian remarked, that concerns the Swiss, not the Belgians. But in the iron and steel trades the shadow of American competition looms dark on the horizon.

The other day, in a tender for locomotives, the Baldwin Works at Philadelphia offered to put on the rails

at Antwerp a locomotive at 500 dols. less than the lowest offer of the great firm of Cockerill.

The general conviction that there will soon be a great slump in protection in America by no means lessens their uneasiness. Belgium, as befits a nation which exports manufactured goods averaging £10 per head of population, is all for free trade, and, like Mr. Gladstone, it is inclined to believe that American competition will not be seriously begun to be felt until the United States has thrown its markets open to the world.

The brave Belgian is not disposed to despair, but those who know most about the resources and capabilities of America are the most alarmed.

Prince Albert, who will one day sit on the Belgian throne, came back from his visit to the United States profoundly impressed by the manufacturing resources of America. He saw the bicycle factories at Hartford turning out seven hundred cycles a day; he visited the Baldwin works, where they build six locomotives a day; he visited Pullman's works, where they turn out a wagon every fourteen minutes; and he tells how Mr. Carnegie produces three-fifths of the whole steel output of England. He spent a week travelling in a private train with Mr. Hill, of St. Paul, and he came home overwhelmed by the spectacle of the mineral and mechanical resources of the Republic.

"I saw," he said on his return, "in one place a mountain of ore in which the mineral extracted from the higher levels made its way by natural gravitation

down the hill to meet at the furnace the coal mined at its foot, and almost without the intervention of the hand of man the process was complete. How can we compete with such a country as that?"

"Alas!" said Prince Albert to an American friend, "you will eat us all up, you Americans; you will eat us all up."

The response of the Belgians to the Tsar's Rescript has been most enthusiastic. On this subject Belgium is practically unanimous. Everywhere the proposal has been hailed with enthusiasm—even in quarters where it might have been scouted. The Catholics, from the highest to the lowest, are as one man in favor of the Tsar's philanthropic design. In this they are in absolute accord with their head. Nothing could exceed the delight of the Holy Father on receiving the appeal of the Tsar in such a cause. For once there is a veritable reunion of Christendom: the official chiefs of the Greek Orthodox and of the Roman Catholic Churches are now going hand in hand in a crusade of peace. There are special reasons why the Roman Catholics should welcome the Russian proposal. Even if the Conference did not go one step further than decreeing a stay of armaments for five years, it would deliver the Belgian people at once from a constantly pressing menace of increased armaments.

For years past there has been a tug-of-war going on in Belgium between the King and his subjects on this very question. The Belgian standing army is only 31,000 strong. It is raised by the old-fashioned

method of conscription, and hitherto the Belgians have obstinately resented all the appeals of their King to introduce universal compulsory military service. The King is not a man of war. He is emphatically a man of peace. But he stands between two fires. France is always whispering into his right ear that unless he increases his army the Germans will invade France *viâ* Brussels; while the Germans whisper as earnestly into his left ear that unless he introduces universal military service Belgium will inevitably become the cockpit of the bloodiest war ever fought between civilized men. But the Belgian, who hates even the conscription, will not tolerate the idea of universal service. It appeals no doubt to certain democratic prejudices, and it appeals specially to the instinct of self-preservation. The Belgian Parliament, however, will have none of it, and the Catholic party, which created and sustains the Government, is irreconcilably opposed to the whole scheme. The feud is so fierce that no General can be found who will accept office as Minister of War unless the army is enlarged according to the King's desire. The present Minister of War is a civilian who tacks on the control of the military machine to the more congenial labors of the Ministry of Ways and Communications. It is obvious what a godsend the Tsar's proposal has been to the governing body in Belgium. At a stroke the Tsar has delivered them from the one dread which has haunted them for years. If the Conference succeeds, and the *status quo* is stereotyped, the ideal of the

Belgian Government is attained, for all talk of universal compulsory military service vanishes into limbo.

The Socialists look the Russian gift horse in the mouth, and shake their heads when they find the principles on which they have so often insisted countersigned by a Tsar. Some of their spokesmen have insisted upon the necessity of inaugurating the Millennium by establishing the universal reign of right against might, as a condition preliminary to any acceptance of the disarmament proposal.

But the popular feeling is unmistakable. Whether in the press or on the platform, in the palace of the King, or even in the camp of the army itself, there is only one opinion as to the sincerity of the Tsar and the duty of all civilized men to back him up. I spent a Monday afternoon in Liége, the great centre of the Belgian gun trade. There was there in session a Catholic Social Democratic Congress, attended by workmen and a host of Progressive priests from the country side. Although it was not in their regular agenda, a working man from Brussels insisted upon interpolating into their proceedings a hearty vote of appreciation and support to the Tsar for his proposal of a Conference of Disarmament. The motion, studded with copious "whereases" and couched in the choicest Catholic phraseology, was carried with unanimity and enthusiasm.

Men like General Brialmont, who believe in their profession, are dubious about the possibility of achiev-

ing any practical result. But the Belgians who do not wear epaulets are more sanguine.

What ultimate outcome there may be no one can say. But I saw and heard enough in this microcosm of Europe to realize how grievous will be the disappointment, how terrible the disillusion if the splendid initiative of the Tsar is not energetically supported and carried to a successful conclusion.

CHAPTER II

FRANCE

Last autumn the New World invaded the Old World, and in Paris the Hotel Continental was the headquarters of the Army of Invasion. It was a pacific invasion, no doubt, but the invaders were bent, if not on conquest and annexation, at least upon appropriation and extension of borders.

The struggle that went on between the French authorities and the United States Commissioners of the Exposition of 1900 brought forcibly home to the European the great question of the future. It is a miniature reproduction on a small scale of the conflict of forces which looms ever more gigantic before the eyes of mankind.

"Room, room, room there for the New World!" cried Mr. Commissioner-General Peck. The American must have room to spread himself and his wares at the World's Fair with which Paris will salute the new century, and the allocation of space in the Exposition grounds is far too small. The amiable French Ministers expostulate with polite shoulder shrug. "'Tis impossible. What would our friends the Americans have us do? Germany and Great Britain are

also imperiously clamoring for more ground space. We have already allotted the United States all we can spare. It is impossible, quite impossible."

"Impossible!" thunders the Commissioner-General; "don't use to me that idiot of a word! Your space is small, I admit—only 336 acres as against 750 acres at Chicago. But our needs are great. Room, make room for the growing giant of the Western World!"

What can be done? The 336 acres cannot be stretched like elastic. All the space is appropriated. If Uncle Sam were to have more room, he could only have it at someone else's expense. Perhaps a scrap of space can be secured from a concessionnaire—here and there a bit can be squeezed from some South American Republic. But if Mr. Commissioner-General Peck and his staff were to attain the object on which they had set their hearts, "somebody's got to git."

The Americans were quite remorseless, ruthless, relentless in their demands. Chicago, in the person of Mr. Peck, and New York, in the person of Mr. Woodward, backed by President McKinley and the whole of the United States, were determined that whoever got left in the scramble for space it should not be Uncle Sam. They were hustling round at a great rate, negotiating, blarneying, bullying, buying, pushing, until the Old World felt that it was being crowded on its own ground, perhaps even crowded out of its own ground by the Western conqueror.

What went on in the Exposition grounds is going on on land and sea all round this planet. The shrinkage of the world has suddenly brought the nations face to face with each other. In the markets, in the colonies, and on the high seas the Old World is beginning to realize that perhaps there may no longer be enough to go round, that somebody is going to get left, and that that somebody is not going to be the New World. The conviction is coming home more slowly to the Frenchmen than to the Belgians, but they are learning it all the same.

The result is an immediate increase of the deference paid to the United States by the French. Nothing succeeds like success; and the difference in the attitude of the French to the Americans since Manila and Santiago is more marvellous than edifying. Frenchmen of all classes, who twelve months ago sneered at the "dollar-hunting Yankee" as their forefathers scoffed at "the nation of shopkeepers" across the Channel, are running over each other in a helter-skelter race, vying with each other as to which can first fall on Uncle Sam's neck and embrace him. The way the Fourth of July was celebrated in Paris last year, as compared with its predecessors, was an object-lesson in the worship of the rising sun. If by any possibility any space could be discovered any way in the Exhibition of 1900 it was of course to be made over to the sister Republic, rather than to the German or to the Briton. Was not the Commissioner-General ready to erect a statue of Lafayette in the grounds—if

only he could get the space on which to set it up? The Minister of Commerce and the Minister of Foreign Affairs vied with each other in paying exceptional compliments to the Commissioners of the United States. Nay, it was even hinted that in 1899 American goods would be admitted to France under the minimum tariff, reciprocal concession being of course anticipated on the other side.

The war was a revelation to the average Frenchman. When Dewey destroyed the Spanish fleet at Manila the scales began to fall from their eyes, and they "saw men as trees walking." When Cervera's fleet shared the same fate off Santiago, they realized that a new naval power had been born into the world, inheriting from the Destinies, as one of them put it, the good fortune that has always attended the English on the seas. Early in the war a report that the American fleet had been destroyed and Admiral Sampson killed threw the Parisian populace into a paroxysm of delight. In those days no one disguised his sympathies with Spain. But nowadays they all agree to forget all that, and they are already convinced that there were never such friends of the Americans as the French, and never have been since the world began.

All this is very pleasant for Americans in Paris, and it contributed to facilitate the work of the Peace Commissioners. There was no trace of disposition in official quarters to make any difficulties in settling the terms of peace. If the United States were to insist upon annexing every scrap of territory pos-

sessed by Spain in the West Indies and the Far East, France would not interfere. The only demur made to the Imperial expansion of the United States comes from experienced observers like M. de Pressensé, of the *Temps*, who regret the new departure, not because it affects France, but because it endangers the American Republic. The French are at present exhibiting to the world some of the deplorable results of dominant militarism. They sigh when they see the New World gliding down the inclined plane which leads to Cæsarism. They declare that the annexation of the Antilles and of the Philippines will necessitate the creation of a large standing army, the enrolment of a corps of functionaries, a departure from all the traditions of the Republic, and a total transformation of the letter and spirit of the American Constitution. In France, as in Britain, it is the men who know most of the United States—such men as Mr. Bryce and M. de Pressensé—who are most alarmed as to the consequences of the new departure of the New World.

When I was in Paris I wrote to the Associated Press:—

I see that there appears still to be some question as to whether the European Powers ever actually proposed to intervene on behalf of Spain. The story was that they had decided to do so, and were only stopped by the blunt intimation from Lord Salisbury that if they ever attempted any such thing the British fleet would be placed under the orders of Mr. McKinley. It is a very pretty tale, and Lord Salisbury might have said something of the kind if the other Powers had been mad enough to propose any such thing. Possibly some influential Briton did say something of the

kind when talk of intervention was in the air. But I have the highest official authority, both British and French, for stating that there was never any proposal brought forward by M. Hanotaux for European intervention against the United States, and that therefore no occasion arose for the exercise of the friendly offices of England. I regret having to destroy the legend, but *magna est veritas*, and however delighted John Bull might have been to have lent a friendly hand to Uncle Sam if the Continental Powers had tried to interfere, he never had the chance. And for this reason. The European Powers, and France most of all, had too much sense.

The origin of this story I discovered two months later when I visited Vienna. The legend had, after all, an indestructible basis of truth.

Men of the world, men of experience, men of affairs —above all, men who are deeply versed in the tortuous wiles of diplomacy—agree in expecting nothing from the Conference of Disarmament, and in fearing much. If the hard-pressed toilers of the world are to obtain any appreciable relief from the crushing load of Militarism, they will have to extend to the generous initiative of the Tsar a much more hearty reception than it is receiving from the men in office. The Democracy may help the Autocracy to achieve this boon for the human race. It will certainly not reach them at the hands of the Bureaucracy.

Everywhere the Governments have answered the Muravieff Rescript with the customary courtesy that is always extended to anything that is said by the master of many legions, but, with one or two exceptions, of responsive enthusiasm there has been none.

Every one admits the sincerity of the Tsar, every one professes to admire his idealism and his philanthropy. But when all that is said and done, there is the most astonishing consensus of opinion that "it is not business." "Everything," they say with a shrug of the shoulders, "will go on exactly the same as before. There is only one Circular the more."

So speak everywhere the cynical and very much disillusioned diplomatists. Diplomacy, it must be admitted, is not usually a forcing-bed for moral enthusiasms. Ambassadors and Ministers who for the last thirty years have been perpetually face to face with the omnipresent activity of Bismarck may be pardoned for thinking twice, and even thrice, before they expect any good thing to come from the Nazareth of Imperial Chancelleries. Men who for the last half-dozen years have been familiarized with the ineptitude of the European Concert can hardly be expected to have many illusions left as to the possibility of bringing in the Kingdom of Heaven by any sort of international compact. It is only in the hearts of the common people, and among the masses where, far from the *coulisses* of diplomacy and the intrigues of Courts, men still cherish generous enthusiasms and an unshaken faith in the great ideals of Peace, Justice and Progress, that the Tsar's proposal elicits any hearty response. "After all," said a young countryman, after a long discussion with a friend, "the Millennium is bound to come some day, and who can say whether it may not come this way as well as any other!" "The

Millennium is bound to come some day "—there is the keynote of the situation. From those who believe that, who cling to it as the great hope of the world, as the eternal pole star of the progress of mankind, the Conference on Disarmament receives a welcome the heartiness of which is only weakened by the haunting fear that it may be too good to be true.

The full significance of the Tsar's initiative has, however, as yet been but dimly perceived, even by those who have welcomed it most heartily. Altogether apart from its proposals, or the subject of them, it carries written in every line of it the glad tidings of great joy that the winter of the period of old age is over and gone, and that once more mankind is facing the glad, joyous spring-time of a new century, under the leadership of those whose hearts are still fresh with the divine inspiration of youth. The old century is dying—let it die. Dr. Busch's "Secret Pages of Bismarck's History" furnishes us at once with its epitaph and its condemnation. But lo! the sky glows in the East with the first promise of the splendor of the coming day. In the Imperial Rescript, however Utopian it may be, we have the first great challenge which the new age has flung at the feet of the most gigantic evil of our time. Here, at least, is something of the faith, the courage, and the magnificent audacity of youth. In the task of high emprise to which Nicholas II. summons the nations of the world he may fail. It is not in mortals to command success. But it is better to have tried and failed than never to have tried at all.

Hence, the more we think of it, the more just, the more true, appears the pregnant dictum of Mr. Morley. The Tsar's appeal is a touchstone of the peoples. "It will show us what we are and where we stand."

It is natural that in France, and most of all in Paris, the doubting spirit which denies should be paramount. It is a hundred years since France used up the enthusiasm of the Revolution in lighting the camp fires of the Napoleonic armies. Since then, although there has ever been a remnant who have preserved the sacred fire, "the men who swing France," whether under monarchs, Empire or Republic, have not exactly been French-speaking Quixotes. So far, indeed, have modern Frenchmen gone in the other direction that I well remember, ten years ago, hearing one, now recognized as one of the most influential diplomatists, laughing to scorn the notion that there was even enough idealism left in France to make the war of revenge popular with the people. "There are only two men in France," he said in his bitter, sarcastic fashion, "who ever think of such an ideal thing as the fate of Alsace-Lorraine, and one of them is a woman." He referred, of course to the soldier-poet, Paul Déroulède, who has just been threatening M. Clemenceau with the guillotine, and Madame Adam, of the *Nouvelle Revue*. The worship of material comfort has succeeded all other ideals with most Frenchmen. Hence the Tsar's appeal falls upon ears stuffed as with cotton wool, and awakens slight response in hearts which resound all day long with the Babel of the Bourse. There is no

longer a Victor Hugo worthily to respond in the name of France to the initiative of the Tsar.

The faithful few who are true to the great ideals of the Revolution, and the still smaller remnant who worship in secret at the shrine of the Prince of Peace, are overborne in the roar and rush of politicians and financiers. They find it more than they can do even to keep the scales of justice free from the sword of Brennus at home. They have no energy left to combat militarism abroad. The army itself, which is traditionally supposed to be the cradle of all that is most exalted in heroic sentiment, can hardly be expected to wax very enthusiastic in support of a Peace Conference. But there is another reason for the coolness of Paris towards the Conference. The French felt hurt that they had not been consulted by their ally before he issued the Rescript. They anticipated nothing in the world so little as such a proposal from such a quarter. Not disarmament, but more armaments, was their idea of what the Tsar desired. To oblige him they had even allowed French shipbuilders to give priority to the construction of Russian warships over those of France, to the production of which it had repeatedly been declared all the shipbuilding resources of the nation would be exclusively devoted. The Rescript, therefore, simply took away their breath. They felt themselves, in more senses than one, "up a tree." They did not know where they were or what the Tsar was driving at. They thought he was spoiling for a fight, and lo! he issued an encyclical to the world at

large, proclaiming the supreme importance of Peace!

Behind all that first natural sensation of surprise there was another which went much deeper. The proposal to attend a Conference to discuss disarmament seemed to suggest that there was no longer a purpose for keeping up such gigantic military establishments. In other words, it appeared to imply that Europe had at last settled down in a state of normal equilibrium, and that everybody was practically content with the existing frontiers. That was, in effect to ask all the nations of the world to enter upon a pact of peace, the practical result of which would be that each and all of them would countersign and guarantee the Treaty of Frankfort. That treaty, indeed, would, in such a case, become the very charter and basis of the system which the Conference was to inaugurate. Farewell, then, to all hope of the *Revanche;* farewell for ever to Alsace and Lorraine! To bid such farewells may be obeyed if it be a decree of the Destinies, against which it is vain to repine and impotent to rebel. But to be suddenly summoned by your own friend and partner, *àpropos de rine*, to say those farewells at a moment's notice—that, indeed, was more than French human nature could bear. Hence, after the publication of the Rescript, a profound and miserable chill came over French sentiment towards their Russian ally.

That mood existed, but it has passed. Count Muravieff had no difficulty in explaining that the Tsar was bound, in taking such initiative, to consult no other

Power, for the twofold reason that if he had consulted any one it would have compromised the Power he took into his confidence and have offended the other Powers who were not consulted. It was equally easy to explain that while the Rescript might initiate a policy that hereafter might have immense consequences, it did not even suggest any such chimerical a step as the immediate disbandment, or even the immediate reduction, of armaments. What was suggested was merely to cry halt in the race to ruin, and to discuss arrangements for arresting the continuous increase of expenditure on armies and navies. If France objected, of course nothing could be done. The absolute independence of each Power was intact. But there were good reasons why France should not object. She has already reached the ultimate limit of her resources in men. She could not increase the annual contingent of recruits, for the simple but sufficient reason that French mothers no longer bear enough boys to furnish any more food for powder. Germany has still a vast reservoir of surplus manhood to draw upon. To stereotype the *status quo* would therefore be at least as great a gain to France in this respect as it could be to Germany by its indirect and apparent consecration of the Treaty of Frankfort.

There were still other reasons which have contributed not a little to assuage the irritation felt in France at the Tsar's proposal. It was obvious that the first condition *sine qua non* of the meeting of the Conference was that the Powers represented, in agreeing

to discuss the financial, military, and economical problem mooted by the Tsar, did so without prejudice to all the political and territorial questions on which they differed. At one time, it is conceivable, a Tsar might have refused to enter into a Conference with France, lest it might appear to imply that he recognized the principle of Republicanism. Now not even the greatest stickler for the Divine right of Kings feels that he is false to his convictions or consecrates the principle of the Revolution by meeting the representatives of the Republic, or even of entering into an alliance with a Republican Government. As it is with political questions, so it is with those relating to frontiers. They are as much out of the purview of the Conference as questions of dynasties or of the rival principles of Monarchy and Democracy. The Conference will no more discuss the question of Alsace-Lorraine than it will discuss transubstantiation or the Rights of Man.

But that is not all. For the Tsar has at hand a valuable and effective reply to the French complaint. The proposed Conference may postpone the immediate outbreak of a war of revenge for the revindication of the lost provinces, but it certainly does not do so more decisively than the French had done already by their great exhibition of 1900. That Exhibition is itself a kind of Peace Conference. When France invited Germany to exhibit her goods in the great show of the new century, she acquiesced in the *status quo*. Of course, she did not guarantee Germany the uninterrupted possession forever of her lost provinces.

Neither will she do so by accepting the Tsar's invitation. But she did give Germany the very best and most substantial security against a sudden French attack that any one could desire. These and other considerations have had their weight, and the momentary irritation against their Russian ally has already abated.

The question as to whether the French people are longing for revenge and the revindication of their lost provinces is one on which the most widely diverse opinions are expressed. There is, however, substantial agreement among men of all shades of opinion that while France vigilantly maintains all her reserves and is resolved to take advantage of all the opportunities which fortune may send her to regain her old provinces, she will never of her own motion or on her own initiative make war on Germany. A leading French statesman with whom I was discussing this question expressed in the very strongest terms his conviction that no French Ministry will ever take the initiative in attacking Germany. "The risk would be too great, the sacrifices too immense. If Germany were involved in war elsewhere—ah, then, that would be another matter. But as long as Germany is at peace we shall not lift a finger to dispossess her." This helps to enable us to understand what a powerful security for peace the ineradicable yearning for the lost provinces has become in Europe to-day.

A shrewd and experienced observer in Paris, on the other hand, told me that the popular feeling in favor of war was stronger now than it had ever been since 1870.

The lessons of that terrible year have been forgotten. Paris is now in the hands of young men to whom the bombardment of Paris is only a matter of history and of tradition. Bismarck is gone. All the great Generals who conquered France are dead. The French army was never stronger or better equipped than now. If the French saw their chance, they would not hesitate for a moment. If, for instance, the Russian Emperor but held up his little finger——!

But the Russian Emperor is holding his little finger down. There is another side to this alleged eagerness of France for war. It is the French of the Parisian boulevards that talk so lightly of so dire a catastrophe. France of the provinces—laborious, thrifty, cautious France—is of another opinion. A brilliant and distinguished Frenchman—diplomatist, journalist, and patriot—assured me that the French peasant was very far from sharing the views of the boulevards. "If you were to go to-day," he said, "to the average French peasant, and tell him that the circumstances were so propitious that he could certainly reconquer Alsace-Lorraine by an expenditure of only 10,000 men and £10,000,000, he would reply unhesitatingly, 'No; I will not spend either the men or the money.'" It may be so. But the worst of it is that the war is made before the peasant has an opportunity of having his say. It is not his to decide. It is only his to pay, to suffer, and to die.

The question of the Peace Conference I found excited little attention in Paris excepting on account of

the bearing which it might have on the Franco-Russian Alliance. When that alliance was formed, those who did not know the Tsar imagined that it was a menace to the peace of Europe. Those who knew the Tsar knew otherwise. The object of Alexander III. in thus restoring the equilibrium of Europe and in satisfying the wounded *amour propre* of France was the natural culmination of the policy which won for him the title of the Peace Keeper of the Continent. In his eyes France isolated, France nervous, France desperate, was a constant menace to the peace of the world. At any moment she might make a plunge, by which she would hurl not only herself but all other nations into the hell of a general war. To prevent this it was necessary to offer her inducements sufficient to lead her to acquiesce in the *status quo*. There were two perils of war before Europe, both threatened by France. She had never accepted either the German possession of Alsace-Lorraine or the British occupation of Egypt. To attempt to reëstablish her position either in Metz or in Cairo meant war. To minimize the risk of any such peace-shattering policy, Alexander III., without asking for any express disclaimer by his ally of hostile designs directed either against Germany or Britain, virtually secured the practical acceptance of the *status quo* by offering France an alliance which was guaranteed to fall to pieces if she undertook an aggressive war. Russia flung over the French Republic the immense ægis of her alliance, delivering France from all dread of attack from without, and restoring

her at once to the position in Europe which she had lost in 1870. But all these advantages were forfeited if France drew the sword against the existing order, the *status quo de facto* on the Rhine and the Nile. Hence the Franco-Russian Alliance became, as it was intended it should become, a solid security for European peace, and therefore, little as the French liked it, a virtual consecration of the Treaty of Frankfort. It was acclaimed, no doubt, by the Chauvinists of the boulevards as if it were the first step to the *Revanche*. It was exactly the opposite. But Baron Mohrenheim appears to have fooled the self-deluded Frenchmen to the top of their bent, while the Tsar, conscious that he had made the limitations of the alliance absolutely clear to the rulers of the Republic, felt under no obligation to make public declarations which might have annulled the whole object of his policy of peace. The Tsar knew also that although the boulevards of Paris might revel in the delirium of anticipated war, the French nation, pacific and industrious, hailed with immense relief an alliance which delivered it at once from all risk of foreign attack, or from the still greater peril of such a headlong rush to ruin as that which culminated on the battlefield of Sedan.

France is preoccupied with the Dreyfus case. And the Dreyfus case is militarism come to judgment, militarism made manifest before the world. The tree is known by its fruits, and the impeachment of militarism on economic grounds contained in the Muravieff circular is supplemented and made complete by the

revelation of the outcome of militarism in the moral field. "Militarism," says the Tsar, "empties the pockets of the nations." And France, responding across the Continent, as deep answers unto deep, answers, "And destroys their souls!"

France, preoccupied, absorbed, possessed by the Dreyfus case, is the drunken helot of militarism to-day. She is as one bewitched, the prey of some foul obsessing demon, which takes a perverse delight in compelling her to wallow in all manner of defilements, from which "ideal France, the deathless, the divine," would have recoiled with angry scorn. It is the Nemesis of the system against which the Tsar has taken the field. France never had a more numerous or better equipped army than she possesses at present. But France never was weaker, more timorous, more under the terror of those nightmares which disturb the sleep of nations. It is not an exaggeration to say that the net result up to date of all the sacrifices which France has made over her armaments is to make her a prey to panic to an extent almost inconceivable to any one outside Paris. You ask in amazement: "Why all this tremendous hubbub over the revision of a sentence admittedly illegal, defended by evidence admittedly forged?" and the opponents of revision whisper with white lips that revision would inevitably bring about war! To avoid the risk of so terrible an alternative, better let a thousand innocent men perish in the Devil's Isle! Thus it appears that France, despite all her armaments—nay, is it not because of them?—has

become so coward of heart and craven of spirit that she dare not even do justice to one of her own officers for fear of the foreigner! Such abject poltroonery would disgrace the pettiest of states without a gun in its arsenal or a fort on its frontiers. But to this pass has come to-day this distraught Republic.

The delirium will pass. Revision is already virtually secured, and the light is already beginning to break through the dense darkness in which France has lain so long. But for the present the country is still in the throes of a fever, which springs as directly from the atmosphere of the barrack-room as ague results from the malaria of the marsh. Nations create armies that they may be strong and independent, able to do justice within their own frontier, none daring to make them afraid. But France, having sacrificed everything to the creation of her army, has been afraid to do justice because of her army. The army, no longer a means to an end, having become an end in itself, thus tends to defeat the very aim and object of its being. The nation, or at least such portions of the nation as find articulate expression in the press, has been in a very ague fit of fear. It cowered before its own shadow. It trembled at the thought of the wrath of the foreigner. It shrieked in panic dread at the mere suggestion that even officers of the General Staff should be compelled to obey the laws. There is no crime which its more demented spokesmen do not commit, either in imagination or in fact. They glorify forgery, applaud suicide, and openly exult in the pros-

pective massacre of thousands of their fellow-countrymen. Everything that is base, everything that is dishonorable, everything that is cowardly, everything that is false, abject and criminal forms the constant meditation of Frenchmen to-day. Whichever side they belong to, these are the things they impute to each other; and if they are the party in power, these are the things they employ without hesitation in their panic-stricken warfare against a nightmare. To such a pass has militarism dominant brought our once noble France—France of the Revolution, France of Jeanne d'Arc.

It is easy to see the direct bearing of this upon the proposal of the Tsar. In the Middle Ages the knights progressively increased the thickness of their armor until the fighting-man became a mere iron-cased mummy. He had not sufficient strength to move beneath his defences. In France we see the same phenomenon in the moral field. Her moral vitality is no longer sufficient to move under the superincumbent mass of her armaments. The old ideas, so distinctively French, of Chivalry, Liberty, Justice, Law—all the sublime ideals which made France for centuries the knight-errant of humanity—appear to have perished beneath the weight of her immense military system. The *amour propre* of the army, the prestige of a staff, have superseded the nobler ideals of national life. Matters are much worse now than in the Middle Ages. For the iron and steel cuirasses of the overloaded knights were at least inert matter. But the

armature beneath which the nation is perishing to-day has a horrible vitality of its own. It is, as it were, alive, and believes that the body exists for it, and that brain, heart, conscience, and the ideal, which are collectively the soul of the nation, is a minus quantity compared with the prestige, the authority, and the convenience of the army. They, if not the ultimate, must at least be very near the ultimate, stage in the self-destructive evolution of modern militarism. Nowhere in Europe could the Tsar find so terrible an object-lesson of the results of the baneful system upon which he is making war. France is a puissant ally, indeed, in the great argument for disarmament.

The danger spot in Europe is, no doubt, Alsace-Lorraine. But the beneficent Power who maketh even the wrath of man to praise Him seems to be employing this Dreyfus delirium of panic and crime to reduce the acuteness of that danger. England long ago lost the moral allegiance of the Irish, the majority of whom are far more American than English. The Dreyfus business is probably the most direct means by which France could have alienated the moral allegiance of the Alsatian people. That which the Treaty of Frankfort failed to effect the Dreyfus scandal is fast accomplishing. The people of Alsace see with amazement and indignation the denial of justice to Alsatians. Albert Dreyfus in the Ile du Diable is an Alsatian. So is Colonel Picquart. It is enough to bear an Alsatian name to be hounded down as a German. To be a Protestant is almost as heinous a crime

as to be a Jew. The honest Alsatians do not understand all this. Their *patrie*, to whose fortunes they have clung with a touching fidelity, was a different France from this. So they are ruthlessly being driven from their allegiance, and every day they are more and more strongly tempted to become more reconciled to the German.

It was of no use discussing in Paris the details of the Conference on Disarmament. No one spares the subject a thought. That is not the way the Franco-Russian Alliance works. His French ally is helping the Tsar in a much more effective fashion. For this Dreyfus business has pretty effectively resulted in the practical disarmament of France. Never since the Commune stood at bay behind the ramparts of Paris has France been so paralyzed by internal divisions. As long as the Dreyfuss business lasts, France is a cipher in Europe. Whenever for a moment the saner France emerges from the Malebolgic pool of passion, suspicion, hatred and savagery beneath which it is submerged, there always comes, as a flood tide, a revived interest in the *affaire* Dreyfus. What a turbid tide it is, reeking from the *cloaca maxima* of the world, bearing along upon its turbid waves the bloody corpse of the suicide Henry, which tosses about amid the wreck of much higher reputations, the *disjecta membra* of the General Staff. It is a mournful spectacle. But who can deny that it makes for general peace?

There is, of course, a possibility that the very madness of the hour may lead to some sudden outbreak.

As Count Arnim wrote in 1871: "The French cannot be judged by the same standard as other nations. They have no sense of proportion, and attach importance to matters that in reality have no significance. In a madhouse the merest trifles may lead to a revolt, and even if it be suppressed, it may first cost the lives of many honest people." There is a danger here, no doubt. But, as Bismarck wrote about the same time: "Two peoples dwell in France—the French and the Parisians. The former loves peace. The latter writes the newspapers, and seeks to pick a quarrel which the other then has to fight out. Both, however, should clearly remember how near the German army is at Chateau Thierry." The German army is no longer at Chateau Thierry. But the solid argument of force is quite as irresistible to-day as it was in 1871, perhaps even more so. And now there is added to that *ultima ratio regum* the fact that the Tsar, the ally and the friend of France, has summoned all nations to a Parliament of Peace.

CHAPTER III

GERMANY

In a bright apartment overlooking Friedrich Wilhelm Strasse I sat pleading the other day for the Tsar's proposals. I was addressing myself to the gracious lady of the household, who, as she sat with her fifteen months old boy nestling in her arms, seemed a living personification of the Madonna and Child, uniting the glory of motherhood with the infinite promise of youth. She was no unworthy symbol of Europe. In her veins ran the mingled strain of noble blood of divers nations, and the face glowed with the noble enthusiasm of the political and social ideals to which she has dedicated her life. The curly-headed boy, coyly looking upon the stranger from the stronghold of his mother's arms, might have been the original of Raphael's Divine Child. As I talked of the need of the nations for release from the intolerable burden of militarism, she sighed.

"Indeed, indeed, it is true. But will it come from such a quarter? His ideas in the Rescript are altogether our ideas. As Bebel said the other day, 'The Tsar is now our comrade and ally.' But we do not trust Russia."

"Do not look a gift horse in the mouth," I replied, "is a very good proverb. And great good once came out of Nazareth. But if these are your ideas, why not support the ideas even when they are put forward by the Tsar?"

"These are our ideas indeed. No Social Democrat nor any section of the working population of Germany but would welcome with open arms any practical proposal to deliver the people from the *corvée* of militarismus, which is so terrible a burden upon——"

Here we were suddenly interrupted. The chubby cherub had climbed down from his mother's lap, and was foraging about for his picture-book. He found it, and turning over the pages, suddenly shouted with infantile glee, ignoring our talk—

"'Daten! 'Daten!"

The little fellow was standing erect, with flashing eye. No longer was he the Divine Child of Bethlehem, but rather an infant Hercules, so stout, so stalwart did he seem. And again he shouted imperiously—

"'Daten! 'Daten!"

"What does the little chap want?" I asked.

"Ach," said his mother, looking down with pride upon her child, "it has always been so. I suppose it is in his blood. My father, you know, was a general. From the first moment he could observe anything it was the same. Always 'Daten, 'Daten! Soldaten he means. Soldiers. No picture pleases him so much as that of soldiers. Always a soldier passing by fas-

cinates him. Thou little rogue," she said, "there is nothing like soldaten for thee, is it not so?"

And I felt as she spoke that from the childish lips the Word of the Situation had come. All the elements of the problem were there. I was speaking up for the Tsar's proposal. She was replying as Europe has replied, and in the midst of our talk of peace and our invectives against militarism, the child, the herr of the future, interrupts with the cry, "'Daten! 'Daten!" Alas, it may now be that once more from the mouth of the babe and suckling there has fallen the winged word of truth.

When in Paris I asked Max Nordau if he believed there was any possible chance of evoking a genuine, widespread, passionate protest from the European masses against the burden of militarism, now for the first time challenged in the name of humanity in the name of the Tsar. "No," he replied undesitatingly, "not at all." "Why," I asked; "do they not groan under the burden?" He answered, "I know intimately the South German peasant. Ask any of them if they wish for war. 'Gott bewahre!' they will reply, 'there is nothing that we hate more.' But then if you again ask, 'Then you do not love the uniform?' they will say, 'Oh, that is another matter. We love the uniform and are proud to wear it. To protest against war—that is possible; to protest against the uniform, no, that would not succeed.'"

From which it would seem that the love of soldaten is not confined to the grandsons of generals. It is a

widespread if not a universal fascination. This is not due to any desire to fight. Much of it, indeed, is due to a desire to avoid fighting. The *corve* of military service, the excessive burden of military expenditure are borne, if not cheerfully, then, at least, stolidly, as a necessary premium to ensure them against war. It is a kind of enchantment, as of some malevolent wizardry, by which peoples, whose only desire is to remain at peace, are persuaded that the only protection against war is to arm themselves to the teeth.

I spoke on the subject with the leader of the Free Trade party, who alike as deputy and journalist is free from all suspicions of militarism. He expressed in the strongest terms his conviction that no popular demand existed for a reduction of armaments in Germany. "Our people," he said, "have grown used to their military panoply. They do not feel its pressure as you might think they would. It is part and parcel of their national existence. They can hardly conceive life without military service, without the uniform. The best proof of this is that on every occasion when the question of an increase of armaments has been put to the people at a general election they have always voted in favor of the increase. Take last election. There existed, no doubt, a strong feeling against the increase of the fleet, but when the election was held any party that had opposed the fleet programme would have been swept away."

"Your eminent deputy forgets," replied a leading Social Democrat, to whom I had repeated these obser-

vations, "that the Social Democrats have always opposed the increase of armaments, and that every general election has seen an increase of their total poll." What he says is true possibly of the lower middle class, of the trading class, of the higher class. But of the masses of the population it is not true. The men upon whom the blood tax falls, the artisan, the laborer, the peasant, by them militarism is detested. I wish you could attend our Conference at Stuttgart, mingle with the delegates, speak with those who are of the people, and judge for yourself what the millions of workers think of armaments. As for the increase of the fleet, that was voted on under the clever management of the Kaiser, who used the Kiao-Chau incident to overpower the opposition. But no one would welcome more than the German masses any diminution in the weight which crushes them to-day."

There is truth in both these opinions. No doubt the Social Democrats have made continuous protest against armaments, but their members are themselves not without pride at having served in the army, and anything more distant from the Quaker, or Stundist, or Tolstoian view of military things than that of the German Social Democrat it would be difficult to imagine. Ever since 1808 this German nation has been passed through the military mill. The habit of military service has become a universal family tradition. Their fathers and their grandfathers before them wore the uniform. Their sons and their grandsons after them they expect will wear it. The uniform, in fact,

has become a second skin; even the suggestion of peeling it off is almost unthinkable. And as for peace, the Kaiser but expressed the universal conviction of his subjects when he said that the best security for peace was the sharp sword of the German army.

This may be admitted, and still there may be ample grounds for welcoming the Congress, and for hoping that at that international parliament, some short simple measure may be agreed upon that might hereafter come to be regarded by the historian as the line dividing the watershed of the old era and the new. All notion of any diminution of the effective strength of the armed forces of the world must be dismissed at once as at present absolutely out of the question. Of disarmament in the sense of even so much as one single soldier in the armed camp which we call the Continent disarming himself, laying down his rifle, and tramping off home,—that is not even to be thought of. To propose to send that one soldier home might precipitate the one catastrophe the thought of which is the nightmare of Europe. But it is possible that the first step towards better things may be taken at the Conference in the shape, say, at first, of a proposal to limit the expenditure on armies and navies for the next five years to their present maximum, and afterwards, of a suggestion for the reduction of the term of military service. The former would be operative at once, and even if it were in some cases evaded, the mere fact that such an international agreement had been arrived at would powerfully strengthen the opposition which in

every country would be made to any further addition to the naval and military budget. As for the latter, it would be for the time being a mere pious aspiration. But it is in the line of a reduction of the period during which men remain with the colors rather than by any reduction of the numbers called up that any progress is likely to be made.

There is no country in Europe where the Tsar's proposal will be supported with more apparent heartiness than in Germany. The Kaiser welcomed it with effusion—and then increased his army by 26,000 men. The press, with the curious exception of the *Vorwärts*, the Social Democratic organ, and the *Preussische Jahrbücher*, the organ of the Conservative Dr. Delbrück, praised it with one accord. "Such a philanthropic young ruler, such noble aspirations," and so forth. But after having delivered themselves of the conventional compliments that are necessary when the master of many millions proposes anything, the diplomatists and the journalists shrugged their shoulders, and with astonishing unanimity declared that "nothing would come of it." And, truly, nothing can come of it if it is left to them. For these cynical sceptics would addle even the egg of a phœnix if it were left to their care.

Germany supports the proposal from considerations of German interest. It would not do to offend the Tsar by criticizing harshly a benevolent proposal that will come to nothing; and then, again, if by a miracle it did come to anything, it could only improve the

security of Germany by strengthening the guarantees for European peace. From a military point of view Germany never felt herself more absolutely secure. For them there is no more any question of Alsace-Lorraine. That is *vorbei*. The Treaty of Frankfort has taken its place among the most stable and unquestioned bases of the international law of Europe. Anything, therefore, that gives more stability to the *status quo* strengthens Germany, and increases the composure with which she can contemplate perils on her western frontier. The French General Staff appears to the Germans to have gone to pieces completely in the confusion over Dreyfus, and M. Déroulède and his patriots appear for the moment to be the most effective allies Germany could desire in keeping guard over Strasburg and Metz.

So far, therefore, Germany can be relied upon to support the Tsar, but except in one direction there has been no sign as yet visible of any desire to give effective expression to popular sympathy with his object. The solitary exception is significant. The Woman's League for International Disarmament which exists in Bavaria is endeavoring to bring about in all the capitals of Europe a simultaneous demonstration by the women of the Continent in favor of the Tsar's proposal. How the matter will be arranged it is as yet too early to say, or what measure of success may attend it. But if the International Council of Women were to desire an opportunity to justify its existence it could hardly desire a better opening than the present. No

object more worthy of the combined effort of the womanhood of the world could be imagined than this of arresting the ever-increasing growth of modern armaments.

Certain it is that if King Demos does not move, and if the mothers of the household are indifferent, then indeed in the future even more than in the present or the past, the word of the situation will be "'Daten! 'Daten!" Ever more soldaten!

Berlin, which has been described by Maximilien Harden as Parvenuopolis, and is regarded by the Kaiser as the capital of Europe, is in reality the Chicago of the Old World. It has dethroned Vienna as the capital of the Holy Roman Empire as completely as Chicago has distanced St. Louis. It now challenges the supremacy of Paris with all the arrogance and more than the success with which Chicago has hitherto disputed the primacy of New York. It is like Chicago in many things, but most of all in self-confidence and a lordly disdain for its neighbors and rivals.

From this central standpoint of the reconstituted Empire the German looks out upon the New World with a sort of indignant surprise. The Intelligence Department of the Germans is believed to be the best in the world. What the German does not know is not knowledge. And when the recent war began, the German was quite sure he knew all about the way in which it would go. His impartiality was not impaired by any sympathy with the Latin race. He held both

combatants in equal dislike. Spain had been very troublesome, both in Europe and in the Far East. The United States had by its food products almost ruined the German landed interest. "A plague on both your houses." Yet although there was no bias of affection to deflect the judgment of the scientific expert, he came to a mistaken conclusion every time. The naval expert glibly demonstrated with all the confidence of infallibility that the Americans had no chance with the Spaniards on the sea. Alike in ships, in guns, in discipline, and in sailors, the Yankees would be sorely put to it to hold their own against the Dons. As for the military men, nothing could exceed their contempt for the United States. "With 40,000 men," it used to be said, "we could invade America." The improvised army of Volunteers was a "rabble," and the proposal to rely upon such a scratch pack of uniformed civilians seemed little short of high treason to the generals who have devoted their lives to the elaboration of the German race into a cast-iron military machine. It seemed presumption to question the conclusions of these oracles. They knew everything; they foresaw everything; they had decided that the non-military Republic would be sorely put to it to best the military monarchy, and as they said it, that settled it.

Hence when the war actually broke out, nearly every German newspaper, excepting the *Frankfürter Zeitung* and *Die Nation* of Berlin, was bitterly, consistently and continuously anti-American. The atti-

tude of the Government was scrupulously correct. It was absolutely neutral. But the sympathies of the nation were as unmistakably anti-American. This not only found expression in the press, it made itself disagreeably felt in the streets and in business. The American felt himself in a hostile atmosphere, and sometimes it was more than an atmosphere. This hostility was due to a mingled feeling of resentment, jealousy, envy, contempt, and the antagonism that is latent between states based on the opposing principles of liberty and authority, of democracy and imperialism.

When the war began and every prediction of the experts was falsified, the Germans felt that something must have suddenly gone wrong in the constitution of the universe. They had all backed the wrong horse, relying upon the selections of their own infallible prophets, and they felt like losers. It did not sweeten their tempers, but they soon began to mend their manners. In a dazed kind of fashion they endeavored to find their bearings, and to regain their equilibrium in their new and unaccustomed surroundings. Their first instinct, as that of the drowning man, was to catch at something, and the flotsam and jetsam of the Philippines naturally suggested itself. They hurried their warships to Manila with an eye to eventualities, but the peremptory "Hands off!" from Uncle Sam gave them pause. Then they suddenly recollected that they had never thought of such a thing. The conclusion of peace gave them time to pull themselves

together, to put on their thinking cap, and to try to size things up.

And this, so far as can be gathered, is the conclusion they have come to. The German is a practical man who is determined to make the best of a bad job. So he is now discovering that the sudden revelation of the fighting capacity of the Yankee is, perhaps, not such a bad thing after all—at least, for Germany. It may, for instance, lead to embroilment with England, at the thought of which the German chuckles. He has long warmed his hands at the fire that smoulders between Russia and England. If another flame were to spring up between England and the United States —well, he would be warmer still.

Then, again, the startling advent of the American navy on the high seas as a first-class fighting force supplies the Kaiser with a new and irresistible argument in favor of adding more ships to the German navy. It is an ill wind that blows nobody good, and the disaster that has overwhelmed the Spanish fleets may be utilized to increase the effective force of the German navy.

But that is not all. The German practical politician, who always judges everything by his estimate of the way it will affect himself without reference to its influence on his neighbors, eagerly profits by the stimulus given to colonialism by the appearance of the United States as a Colonial Power. He smiles as he thinks how the Americans will discover the fallacy of their fond illusions when they seriously begin to equip

navies, maintain armies, and govern distant millions of dark-skinned races. But that is not his affair. What he has to do is first to silence the minority in Germany—that is, against armies and navies and colonies—by making the most of the sudden coming over of the American nation from a policy of mind-your-own-business and cultivate-your-own-garden-in-peace, to a policy of military, naval, and colonial expansion. America's casting vote, they say, is now given on the side of Colonialism and Aggression.

Secondly—and this is perhaps the more important—the blow dealt at Spain by the United States has put the Spanish Empire in liquidation. Germany, like a smart man of business, intends to be in at the sale of the bankrupt stock. She has no intention of quarrelling with the United States. On the contrary, she will be effusively friendly. But she intends to have the first choice in whatever is left of Spain's goods and chattels after the Americans have had their pick. There arem any trimmings left over after your treaty of peace is signed. Germany must at any cost acquire coaling-stations all round the world. Spain has coaling-stations to sell. Germany does not intend to be forestalled. She has long had an eye on the Caroline Islands. There are less probable contingencies than a deal by which Germany might at a stroke take over the whole wreck of the Spanish Empire in the Far East. No one can foresee what kaleidoscopic changes may come about in the near future, when the Colonial possessions of Spain and also of Portugal seem likely

to come upon the market to be knocked down to the highest bidder.

The present Emperor is unlike his father in most things, but he inherited from his predecessor a haunting dread of the immense potentialities of the American Commonwealth. This dread, which has hitherto been chiefly commercial, is now extending to the political sphere. The Kaiser has no love for the Monroe doctrine. If the United States cuts the Nicaragua Canal, the need for a German coaling-station in the West Indian islands will be imperious. Nor is that the only possibility of collision between "Americanism" and Germany. The German colonists are increasing in Southern Brazil. Only the other day one of them got into trouble for hoisting the German flag, and his cause has been warmly taken up by his countrymen at home. The Government looks askance at the enthusiasm which begets societies for the promotion of Germanism in Brazil, foreseeing complications. Mr. McKinley was equally opposed to intervention in Cuba, but he made the war notwithstanding. The coyness of Governments is apt suddenly to give way before the awakened passions of their subjects. If the German colonists in Brazil revolt and declare their independence, it will not be a far cry, in the opinion of eager spirits in Berlin, to the establishment of a German Protectorate over the German independent States of South America. And in that case the Monroe doctrine might fail of enforcement unless the American fleet were stronger than that of Germany.

The chief and immediate rivalry is not in colonies but in commerce. In the struggle for the world's market Germany is badly handicapped by her military burdens and by the comparative narrowness of her borders. America she recognizes as her most formidable competitor, and the contest every day becomes more keen.

The admirable speech made by Mr. White, the American Ambassador, at Leipsic on July 4th did much to bring the Germans to their bearings. But it was significant of much that at that banquet but for the direct intervention of the Ambassador himself no German flag would have been displayed. The room was draped with Union Jacks and Stars and Stripes intertwined. But neither German nor Saxon flag was visible. At the last moment a Saxon flag was procured, so that the conventions were preserved.

CHAPTER IV

THE MINOR STATES OF EUROPE

When I was in Rome I had the pleasure of enjoying the hospitality of one of the most modern and least clerical of Europeans—none other than the famous Norwegian novelist, poet and political agitator, Björnstjerne Björnson, who has taken up his winter quarters next door to the King. If only his Majesty would replace the last dozen feet of the monstrously high wall which shuts out the Quirinal gardens from the views of his Norwegian neighbor by a trellis or a railing, M. Björnson would have no reason to wish to change quarters with King Humbert. For he has a charming set of apartments, far above the roar of the traffic in the street below—apartments which open out upon a delightful little garden on the roof, where, under the blue sky of Rome, surrounded by sweet-scented flowers, the Northern poet can look out upon the world as from the eyrie of an eagle. The stout Republican does not find the being next-door neighbors to Royalty altogether to his taste. "We share the music of the King's band," he said; "that is pleasant enough. But the roaring of his lion is less agreeable. And he is always roaring." The lion, it seems,

was a gift from King Menelik of Abyssinia to the King of Italy. It is kept in the garden of the Quirinal, where it is as unhappy as the prisoner in the Vatican. Day and night the royal brute roars his unavailing protest to an unheeding world. But the lion, like his namesake in the Vatican, rages in vain behind his prison bars.

I had met M. Björnson for the first time at the studio of his friend and countryman, M. Ross. He was in famous spirits, and full of the very latest idea that has fascinated this most versatile and quick-witted of men. M. Björnstjerne Björnson is one of the veterans—he is half-way between sixty and seventy, and does not seem more than five and fifty—in the campaign for peace. He has contended for arbitration, for disarmament, for everything, in short, that makes for progress, even before the Tsar was born. To him, therefore, more than to most men, the Peace Rescript was welcome. He was full of interest in all that I had to tell him about Russia and her ruler, and, like every one else with whom I have had the opportunity of speaking on the subject, he rejoiced with exceeding great joy on hearing how things stood. As, indeed, he had good cause. For everything that the friend of peace could hope for is true, and true to an extent which neither M. Björnson nor any one else dared to venture would come true in our time.

"But, after all"—for even M. Björnson has a "but"—"But, after all," he said, "I am not very

sanguine about the Great Powers. They are one and all but beasts of prey." I vehemently objected, and, indeed, considering how the Peace Conference came to be the great hope of mankind, not without cause, against such a summary method of classification. But M. Björnson paid no heed to my protest. "I am concerned," he went on, "about the smaller States, the little Powers. What is to come of them at the Conference?" "What about the little Powers?" I asked. "Are you not satisfied that they should have been invited to the Conference? Never before were the minor States invited equally with their more powerful neighbors to such an international assembly." "That is all very well," he replied, "but it is not enough. I am anxious to see something more than that. I want to see the smaller States group themselves together, so as to act and speak with effect. Each by itself can do nothing. In a league, or federation, or neutrality, they might be a very potent influence in international affairs."

"I entirely agree with you," I replied, "and in Belgium at the very beginning of my tour I repeatedly wrote and spoke urging upon Belgium the importance of taking the lead in the matter. It would be a great opportunity for the King of the Belgians, who has never heretofore had a wide enough field for the exercise of his statesmanship."

"Do you think," said M. Björnson, "that King Leopold is the best man to undertake the organization of the small States?" "Who else would you sug-

gest?" I asked. "The Queen of Holland is too young. The King of Denmark is too old. The President of the Swiss Federation is not known well enough. The King of Portugal has neither the energy nor the ambition nor the central position. And your King, what about him?"

"Why do you think it must be a king?" he asked; "would not some statesman be even better?" "But where will you find your statesman?" I answered. Then M. Ross broke in. "You have not far to seek; you will find him in this very city. There is no man better than Baron de Bildt, the Minister of Sweden. He is a statesman of the first rank, a diplomatist, a scholar, and a man who has all the qualities that you need."

M. Ross did not exaggerate the capacity of the statesman he named. Three years Baron de Bildt declined the Ministerial post offered him by the king, which is now held by Count Douglass, and although he is but the representative of a small State, no one stands higher in the opinion of those who know than Baron de Bildt. But postponing for the moment the consideration of the man to do the work, I asked M. Björnson what was the work that he wanted him to do. "I want," said M. Björnson, "to secure an understanding among the small States before the Conference meets, so that when the representatives of the Powers meet, they will find that they are face to face, not with a disunited group of powerless little States, but with a federation representing 27,000,000 of

Europeans, who are determined to act together to secure their safety, and to obtain a guarantee of their neutrality."

"What States do you mean?" I asked. From his reply I have constructed the following table, with the aid of the "Almanach de Gotha":—

		Population.	Area in kil. car.	Army on Peace-Footing.
1	Belgium	6,000,000	29,500	50,000
2	Denmark	2,000,000	38,000	11,000
3	Holland	5,000,000	33,000	29,000
4	Portugal	4,700,000	89,000	26,000
5	Sweden	5,000,000	450,000	39,000
	Norway	2,000,000	322,000	20,000
6	Switzerland	3,000,000	41,000	——
		27,700,000	1,002,500	175,000

M. Björnson refused to regard the Southeastern States as eligible members for his League of Neutrality. He said they were full of their own ambitions, and some of them at least were by no means contented with their frontiers. But it may be worth while noting the statistics of these States, which have equally been invited to the Conference:—

1	Bulgaria	3,300,000	94,000	45,000
2	Servia	2,300,000	48,000	23,500
3	Montenegro	230,000	9,000	——
4	Greece	2,500,000	65,000	25,000
5	Roumania	5,500,000	131,000	58,000
		13,830,000	347,000	151,500

Altogether, the small States represent a population of 41,000,000, and an army on a peace footing of 320,000 men, not reckoning the Swiss and Montenegrins, every man of whom is trained to arms.

Clearly, the small States may claim to be regarded as constituting a conglomerate of population equal to that of any great Power. Their influence in the European Concert, so far, at least, as the Northwestern States are concerned, would be solely for peace. They would constitute a most valuable element in the balance of power. But will they be wise enough to recognize their common interests and bestir themselves to make common cause in the Areopagus of the Nations? Time will show. But it will not be M. Björnson's fault if they do not bestir themselves, and that without delay.

MAR 16 1899

The UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

ON THE EVE OF THE PARLIAMENT OF PEACE

BY

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